A HISTORY OF ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH IN BRISTOL

1721 - 1955

Albert C. Larned

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Two Hundred Years Of

St. Michael's Rectors

1721 – 1955

By

ALBERT CECIL LARNED

Formerly Curate of St. Michael's Church in Bristol

With

Biographical Sketch Of

The Reverend Canon Albert C. Larned

Canon of the Cathedral of St. John

By

The Reverend Canon Delbert W. Tildesley

Honorary Canon of The Cathedral of St. John

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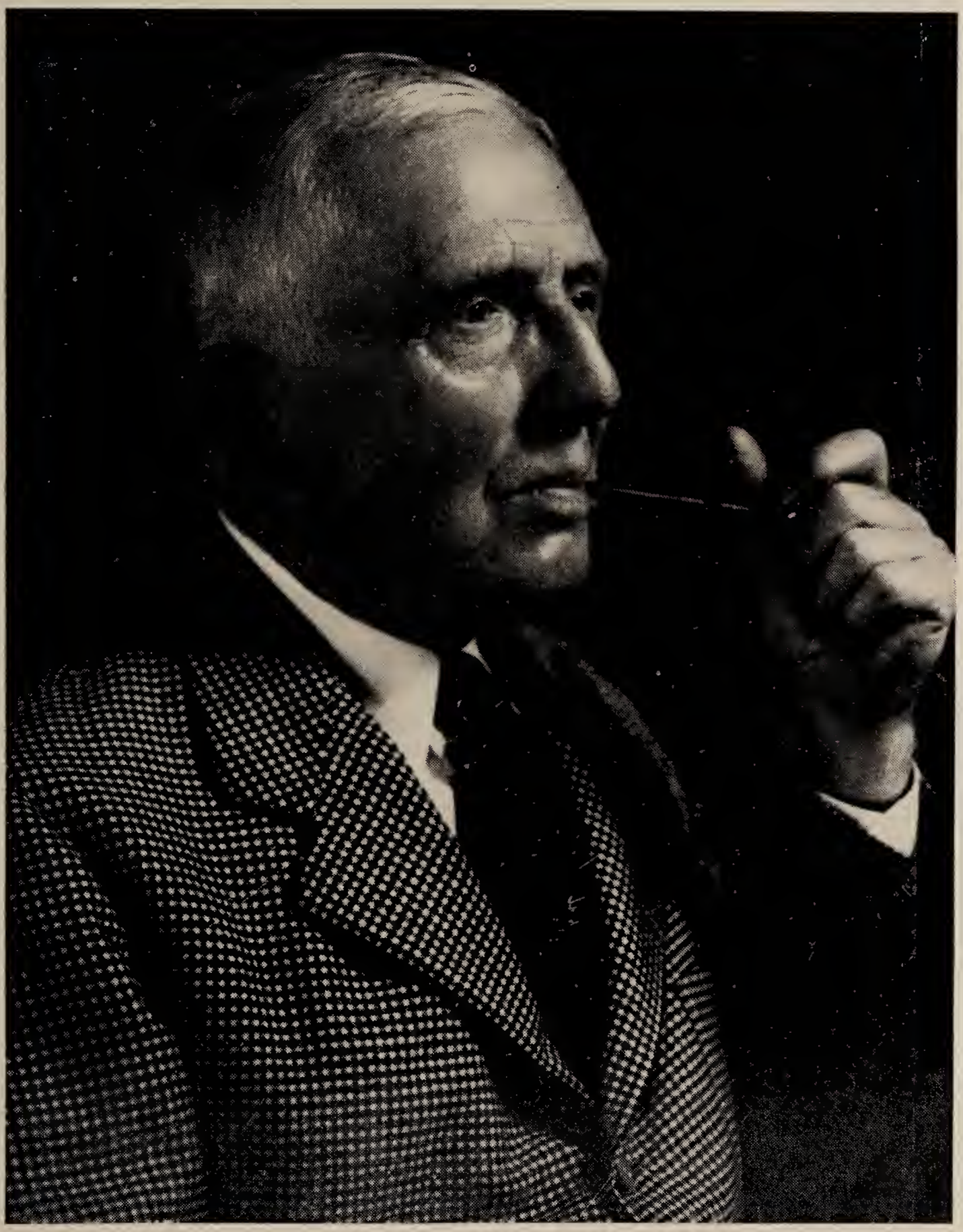

Wallis E. Howe

Who has served St. Michael's Church In Bristol For 60 years

THE REV. ALBERT C. LARNED, CANON

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

of

THE REVEREND CANON ALBERT C. LARNED

It is a great privilege to be asked to write this biographical sketch of the Reverend Canon Albert C. Larned. Canon Larned was a close friend, a wise counselor, and a judicious advisor. Despite the fact that I was young in the Priesthood and that Canon Larned had served faithfully for many years, he always treated me with the greatest respect and as a fellow co-worker. He was a Priest, scholar, gentleman, and above all a sincere and devout Christian. This is attested by the deep respect and honest admiration in which he was held by his fellow townsmen, his parishioners, and his brother Priests.

Albert C. Larned was born in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1883. His parents were Edwin Channing Larned and Lucy Margaret (Raymond) Larned. He was educated at Groton School, Oxford University, and Salisbury Theological College. In 1907 he was ordained Deacon and in 1908 was advanced to the Priesthood; both ordinations took place in England. On July 23, 1907, he was married to Gladys Lilian Lee in St. Peter Port Church at Guernsey, Channel Islands. He is survived by his wife Gladys and daughter Hope.

After serving two years in the church of England he returned to the United States and became Priest-in-charge of St. Mark's Church in Newport, Vermont. In 1911 he became Curate at St. Michael's in Bristol and served here until 1913. Though his tenure as Curate was relatively brief he began an association with St. Michael's which was to last for the remainder of his life.

A brief resume of his other cures reveals that he was Rector of St. Saviour's Church in Bar Harbor, Maine. He was a chaplain in the U. S. Navy from 1917 to 1919, detailed to duty with the Marine Corps, during which time he saw considerable action and was awarded the Croix-de-guerre. He also served parishes in Cranston, R. I.; Brighton, Massachusetts; Jamestown, R. I., and Centerdale, R. I. During World War II he was for a time Assistant Rector of St Martin's Church in Providence, R. I. He was at one

time Dean of All Saints Cathedral in Albany, New York. As a Canon Residenciary he served St. John's Cathedral in Providence, R. I., from 1945-1947.

Canon Larned was the author of several books, the most noteworthy being: "The Pelagianism and Nestorianism of Today, How to Counteract Them"; "Our Daily Bread;" "A Spiritual Treasury"; "Meditation on the First Book of Psalms"; "The Story of Old St. John's". The titles give some indication of his wide range of interests.

Many talks with Canon Larned convinced me that the thing of which he was proudest was his association with St. Michael's. He looked back with joy and pleasure to his curacy under Dr. George Lyman Locke, and he was overjoyed when he was appointed Honorary Associate of St. Michael's in 1955. He recalled that he had held the same position for a few years once before beginning in 1940. His fond affection for St. Michael's is revealed in the pages of this book which was written as a labor of love.

There are several things about Canon Larned's association with this parish which bear note. First and foremost is the affection and esteem in which he is held. On every side one hears nothing but praise for him and for the work which he did. He was a wise Priest and counselor, and a friend to all who needed him. The early Eucharists at St. Michael's which today we take for granted, were begun when Canon Larned was the Curate. While he was a student in England he came under the influence of the Oxford Movement and it left its mark upon him. While he was not an extremist in ceremonial, he was convinced of the centrality of the Altar and he never deterred from this position. So it was that he became Curate with the understanding that there would be an early celebration of the Eucharist every Sunday. Thus it was that in 1911 the early services of the Eucharist were begun and they have continued here at St. Michael's with ever increasing numbers of people coming at an early hour to witness to their belief in the Risen Christ.

It was also Canon Larned who began here the weekday celebrations of the Holy Communion and these too have continued to the present time. Almost until the day of his death he continued to celebrate the Holy Communion at the Serviceman's Altar at 10:00 A.M. on Wednesday mornings. How many times I have seen him in the clergy stalls in the choir before this service reading the Daily Office of Morning Prayer. Who will ever for-

get during the past two years seeing his purple cassocked figure crowned with the beautiful white hair kneeling erect in the Sanctuary at the early service on Sunday morning assisting the celebrant. There are many things for which St. Michael's should be thankful and one of them is Canon Larned.

Shortly before his death, and one of the last times that he spoke in public, he talked to the Men's Club of St. Michael's about his forthcoming history of this parish. One had only to listen to him that night to know how much St. Michael's was a part of him and how much he was a part of St. Michael's.

The last conversation I had with the Canon, was in front of the Church on the day that he was taken to the hospital. We were watching the new Episcopal Church sign being erected. He liked the sign — the familiar red, white, and blue sign which says The Episcopal Church Welcomes You. Despite his years he liked to see progress, and he felt that it was good for St. Michael's to hang out the Welcome sign. Then he talked about some work he wanted to do on the manuscript of this book. He probably would have made many changes in this book had he lived. This book, however, is how he thought of St. Michael's. As you read the pages you will gather how he felt about this historic parish whose roots go back to the year 1718.

The Rev. Canon Delbert W. Tildesley
Rector, St. Michael's Church in Bristol

Feast of the Epiphany, 1957

Pen and Ink Sketch by Dorothy Holt Manuel

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CHAPTER I

FOUR MEMORIALS

The history of a parish is always the story of a group of people who, realizing their fellowship in Christ, are united together by the close ties of faith and prayer. Therefore, parochial history is on an entirely different basis from the story of a secular institution, for the influence of religion on the lives of individuals is of paramount importance in such a history. Obviously it is impossible to record the religious life of all the parishioners of St. Michael's Church in Bristol over a space of 238 years; all that can be done is to concentrate on the lives of certain leaders, whose influence was tremendously felt by the people of their day.

St. Michael's Church is very fortunate in the fact that certain names in the long list of parish priests from 1722 to 1952 stand out conspicuously as "the choice vessels of Thy grace, and the lights of the world in their several generations", these names are: Usher, father and son; Griswold, Bristed and Locke. To tell the story of these men is to relate the religious history of an old colonial parish up to modern times. Now before going into the details of the story of this parish, let us see by their monuments in church what these names meant to St. Michael's Church in Bristol.

(1) "In memory of Rev. John Usher, the first Rector of this Parish and for more than fifty years a missionary here for the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Died May 1st A.D. 1775, aged 80 years.

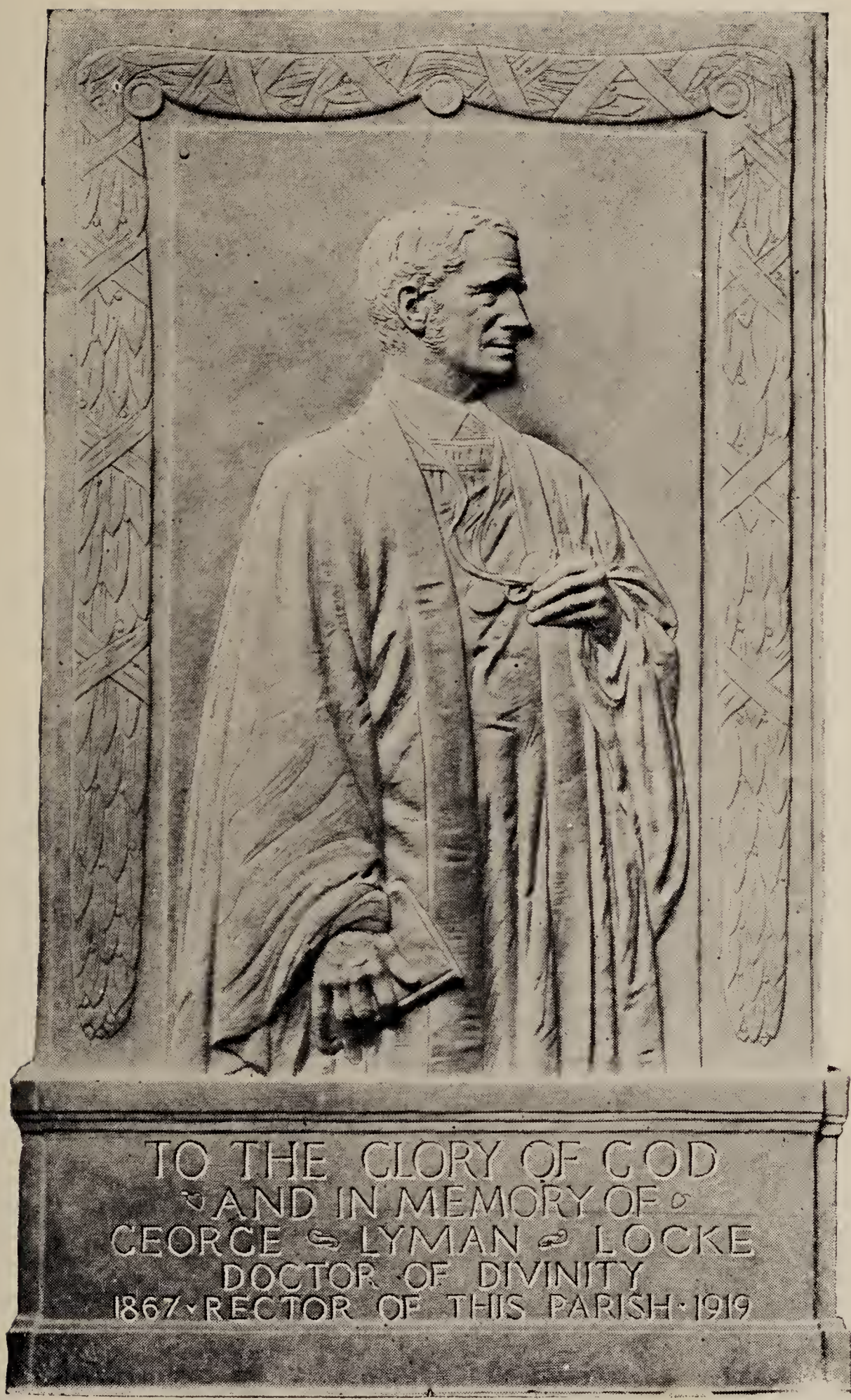
(2) "Also of Rev. John Usher, his Son and Successor, who after having faithfully discharged the high duties committed to him by Apostolic Rites, was gathered to his Fathers July 8th A.D. 1804, aged 82 years."

(3) "In Memory of the Right Rev. A. V. Griswold, D.D., Bishop of the Eastern Diocese, and for many years Rector of this Church. Born in Simsbury, Conn., April 22, 1766. Died in Boston, Mass., Feb. 15, 1843. A noble man, a true Christian, a faithful pastor, a Holy Bishop. Combining singular moderation with unmovable firmness, great ability with beautiful modesty, earnest piety with the widest charity. After a long life of extensive use-

fulness, with no stain upon his memory, he has entered into his rest."

(4) "Sacred to the Memory of the Reverend John Bristed. Born in Dorsetshire, England, October 17, 1778. Died in this Town, Feb. 23, 1855. Mr. Bristed was Rector of St. Michael's Church in this town from Jan. 1830 to April 1843, when he resigned in consequence of ill health. As a minister of the Gospel he was sincere and zealous in the discharge of the duties of his high and holy vocation; in his Parish a faithful Pastor. A most kind friend to the poor and destitute, so happily tempering the blaze of genius with the milder and more heavenly lustre of the Christian graces that he won the affection, esteem, respect and reverence of all who knew him."

(5) "To the Glory of God and in Memory of George Lyman Locke, Doctor of Divinity. Rector of this Parish 1867-1919."



The Memorial for Dr. Locke.

The headquarters of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. London.

The Archives Room of the S.P.G.

The Library of the S.P.G.

The Chapel of the S.P.G.

Seal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts

CHAPTER II

JOHN USHER, EARLY DAYS

It is one of the weaknesses of human nature that as a rule we can only realize things as we have actually seen them or known them. What is outside of this can only be understood by much study and imagination. The historian, no matter what his subject may be, is the person who has his imagination so keyed up that he can see in his mind's eye the subject of his history. Unfortunately the writing of history has largely been left to the compiler of facts, and so many people associate the history of a nation with statistics of battles, reigns of sovereigns and matters of like boring character. Who, for instance, can find any pleasure in the statistics of dioceses and parishes, without the story of how these statistics came to be? So in the story of St. Michael's Church in Bristol the value in the growth of numbers can only be realized in setting out the spiritual causes of this growth; in other words, the power of the Gospel of Christ to draw human hearts.

Let us imagine Bristol in 1718. A few frame houses scattered along Hope, Thames and High Streets, with a few buildings on the cross streets of Bradford, King (State), Queen (Church) and others. Where now stands St. Michael's Church there then stood nothing, and it would have been a bold man who could have foreseen at that spot the future Anglican Church. Yet even then there were a few of the Bristol settlers who, brought up in the old Church of England, had no wish to have their religion given to them by the powerful Puritan junta of Massachusetts Bay. Rather than that they assembled for Anglican worship in a house overlooking Mount Hope, its location unknown. A little later services conducted by laymen in the house of Mr. William Walker, between High and Wood streets, were held. In an old graveyard near High and Walley streets were buried the Walker family, one of whom, John, has this inscription on his grave: "He was the first born of this race, and first buried in this place." He died August 7th 1724.

As the Anglican congregation held together by the loyalty and devotion of its lay members, it soon became apparent that if the church of England in Bristol was to get anywhere, a resident

clergyman must be secured. Even today when we hear some lay-reader lead the General Confession in Morning Prayer, we miss what immediately follows, the Declaration of Absolution, said only by a Priest. So the churchmen of Bristol made application for a minister to the Society of the Propagation in Foreign Parts in London, and their request did not fall on deaf ears. The Rev. James Orem was appointed.

In the meantime, a gift of land on the site of the present church was given by Colonel Henry Mackintosh and 200 pound sterling in cash; 100 pound were contributed from Boston, 100 pound were sent from Newport, and smaller amounts from other places. Nearly 1,000 pounds sterling were raised in Bristol alone, showing the great interest in the venture. Immediately plans were laid for the building of St. Michael's Church, named after the famous parish church of Bristol, England, (the mother-town of our Bristol). This is guess work. Quite as likely it was named for the fact that the first building was finished in Michaelmas referred to by Mr. Usher in his report to the S. P. G. September 28th 1727. Let us see now what happened a little later in a meeting of the S. P. G. in London.

From the Journal Page 242

"The Society read a letter from Mr. Orem dated Bristol in New England 30th October 1722." This letter was a resignation of his appointment to the Bristol church where he had served one year, and his declaration of his intention to accept a commission as chaplain in the Royal Army in the Province of New York. To continue the proceedings of the Society: "another (letter) from Mr. Pigot dated the 3rd of the same month, and another from the Church Wardens and Vestry of Trinity Church at Newport on Rhode Island, dated 29th of the same month, and other letters recommending Mr. Timothy Cutler, late President of Yale College, Mr. Daniel Brown late Tutor of the same, and Mr. Samuel Johnson, late Pastor of Westhaven, who are come over for Orders to the favour of the Society; and the Memorials or Representations of the said gentlemen were also read: Ordered that a Committee be appointed to meet on Monday next to consider in what manner the Society can provide for them, and to report their opinion to the Board; and agreed that the Committee be impowered to give them Texts to preach on, in case they shall be admitted into Holy Orders.

"Mr. Usher, educated at Harvard College in New England, who is lately come over for Orders, attended and offered his Service to be sent as a Missionary from the Society; ordered that he attend the Committee on Monday next.

"Also that they had given Mr. Brown a Text to preach on, viz; 15th verse of the 5th chapter of the Ephesians, and agreed as their opinion that he be appointed the Society's Missionary to Bristol in New England as soon as he shall be in Priest's Orders; the People of that Place having desired in their letter of the 29th of October last that he may succeed Mr. Orem who is about removing to New York, and that he have a Salary of Sixty pounds per annum from Christmas last."

Agreed by the Society

Proceedings Continued

"Also that they had read a Petition of Mr. Usher to them referred pray that he may be admitted the Society Missionary and agreed as their opinion that when he shall be in Priest's Orders, he shall be appointed the Society's Missionary to St. George's Parish in South Carolina with a Salary of fifty pounds per annum to commence from Christmas last, and that in the meantime he prepare a Sermon upon the 23rd verse of the 14th Chapter of the Acts;" "And when they had ordained them elders in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."

Let us now return to the Rev. James Orem in Bristol preparing to join his regiment in the Province of New York. He had been received with much rejoicing when he first came to St. Michael's, and he had been much impressed by the spirit of his parishioners who, even before he arrived, had started to build their church. To quote again from Mr. Munro's history; "The church was a handsome wooden building, sixty feet long and forty feet wide. It stood on the same lot on which stands the present church edifice. Such was the zeal of the congregation, that on the Saturday following his (Mr. Orem's) arrival a temporary floor was laid, benches and chairs were provided, and on the next day between two and three hundred people, not only from Bristol, but also from Swansey, Tiverton, and other neighboring towns gathered for the service."

To return to London. In the archives of the S. P. G. are two letters, called "memorials", both undated, being petitions from

Mr. Usher and Mr. Brown to be appointed the Society's Missionaries in America. Here they are: Mr. Usher's Memorial.

To the Hon'ble and Rev'd the Society for the
Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts

Sheweth

That he was educated at Harvard College in New England and being desirous of taking Orders in the Church of England, he came to Great Britain for that purpose and has made application to the Rt. Rev'd. the Lord Bishop of London for ordination.

Wherefore he prays this Hon'ble Society to entertain him as their Missionary in some part of New England if a vacancy can be found there, if not to St. George's parish in So. Carolina to ye first of wch places he is more inclineable, it being his native (soil) and will be near his friends and your Petitioner as in duty bound shall ever pray, etc.

John Usher

MR. BROWN'S MEMORIAL

"That wh I humbly request of the Hon'ble Society is that the Petition exhibited in the (?) of the church w'ds and vestry of the church in New Bristol to the Society may find a gracious Reception and that I may be permitted, according to their desire therein expressed, to succeed the Rev. Mr. Orem by whose removal a vacancy is made in that place, if I may be thought in a tolerable measure capable of answering the Ends of the Society's mission into those parts."

Dan'l Brown

(See Appendix)

The services of the Rev. Daniel Brown were never to be given to Bristol, for in 1723 he died in England, and the Rev. John Usher in London about to sail for America, wrote on April 26th to the Society asking their advice as to what steps he should take, if the Bristol people were willing to receive him as their minister, apologizing for his inability to call. "The Society (Journal Book IV P. 266) upon reading a letter from the Rev. Mr. Usher, desiring to be fixed at the Parish of Bristol in New England, now vacant by the death of the Rev'd Mr. Brown, pursuant to a former Minister of the Society agreed that he be accordingly appointed Missionary at the said Parish with a Salary of sixty pounds per annum to commence from Midsummer next.

Agreed"

And so there came to Bristol, and not to South Carolina, the Rev. John Usher, who for 52 years was to guide St. Michael's parish. What he found there his own words tell in his "Notitia Parochialis New Bristol in New England, January 1, 1723.

1. Number of inhabitants (families) 133
2. Number of Baptized unknown
3. Number of adult persons baptized this half year, 6
4. Number of actual communicants of ye Church of England, 23
5. Number of those who profess themselves of the Church of England, 45 families
6. Number of Dissenters, Independents, 78 families

papish, none.

"Reply of the Rev. John Usher to the questions of the S. P. G. N. Bristol, September 28, 1727. Church was built (finished) during week of Michaelmas at cost of 1400 pounds sterling, most of which was subscribed locally with great difficulty. Church is 60 feet, 40 feet wide, of wood. Apart from the Society he (John Usher) gets an average of 15 pounds sterling per annum from the parish, no house (rectory) or glebe. About 40 families attend the church 'whose general condition was a middle state of life neither abounding in riches nor yet oppressed with poverty. Sundry of them farmers, others tradesmen as carpenters, joiners, coopers, shoe makers and such like.' They have drawn off from dissent and 'have heartily embraced the principles of the Church.' 'The body of the people live in a space of a mile in length and a quarter in breadth.' Farmers are more distant and there is no other church for 13-14 miles, including a large and troublesome ferry, impassable in winter being frozen over. Frequently there is a great depth of snow.

"There is one meeting house and one teacher supported by a rate on the whole town, dissenters being in majority and carrying everything in their own favour. 'An insufferable presumption.' School master is a dissenter. There is no library. There are 80 slaves and he does his best to teach them virtue and piety. Masters object to their being baptized, 'having imbibed the opinion that they ought not to be detained in slavery after they have received baptism which hinders their admission.' Writes truth and not with rhetorical phrases." (Comment of S.P.G.) PP 51-54.

CHAPTER III

JOHN USHER - LATER DAYS

We have come to a place in our history of St. Michael's Church in Bristol where we can stop for a moment in the narrative and consider the ecclesiastical situation. Although two hundred years ago there was little of the ceremony and ornaments of the Church, which we now take for granted, yet the Church of England held on tenaciously to certain principles which she had inherited from earliest times. These principles were three: (1) The Sacred Ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. (2) The use of the Book of Common Prayer at all services of the Church. (3) Confirmation as a necessary step to Holy Communion, or if that were not possible, a certificate of Baptism. There being at that time no Bishop in the American Colonies, it became necessary for the candidate for Holy Orders to take the long sea voyage to England, with all its dangers of storm and disease. Frequently, the young man never returned to America, being either shipwrecked or what was more common, dying from small-pox. Then, too, the Sacrament of Confirmation could not be administered in the absence of a bishop, and consequently the preparation for First Communion was totally inadequate. The only one of these three inflexible Anglican principles that was conspicuous in America, was the use in public worship of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England.

With the Prayer Book was always included the XXXIX Articles, subscription to which was so universal that not a young man going up to Oxford or Cambridge, could enter the university without subscribing his assent to them. So important were they to the clergy of those days that they formed the basis for all theological teaching, and were regarded (as they rightly are), the only official theology of the Anglican Church.

So in outward appearance there was little noticeable difference in the Episcopal churches of those days from the Congregational churches all around them, except for one very significant fact, viz; at the east end of the church was a Holy Table, set apart by a communion rail in front of it. On the wall behind the Holy Table in letters of gold on a black background,

were often painted the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. Like all churches of the XVIII century, the pulpit with its great sounding board, was the most conspicuous piece of furniture in the building, while directly under the pulpit facing the congregation was the reading desk, where the rector read Morning and Evening Prayer and the lessons from the Bible. Very good illustrations of this setup can still be seen in Trinity Church, Newport, and the Old Narragansett Church in Wickford, Rhode Island. So perhaps we cannot altogether blame the British soldiers in their raid on Bristol in 1778, if they mistook St. Michael's Church for a Meeting House.

We then find St. Michael's Church in Bristol 200 years ago a building of no special ecclesiastical architecture, with an interior drab and dismal, full of pews rented at prices varying according to their location, and with a pulpit important enough in appearance to suggest that the preaching of the Word overshadowed the Lord's Supper. Yet once a quarter at least, the Holy Table, without cross or candles, was decked in fair white linen, while on it was placed the beautiful silver communion set, still in existence, the gift of Nathaniel Kay, Esq. of Newport. Small wonder that with such infrequent Communion Services the tendency to a stiff and formal expression of religion became the order of the day; later to be broken down by the revivals of 1812 and 1820, and much later by the Oxford Movement of the middle of the next century. Thus proving that Evangelical and Catholic are supplementary and not antagonistic terms.

During this period of the reign of John Usher, a very amusing, yet distressing, episode took place, which had much effect on the congregation of St. Michael's, and caused consternation and embarrassment to the Rector, Church-Wardens, and Vestry. Used as the people were to the beautiful old church bells of England, they determined to have one of their own, shipped from London itself. The story of this misadventure is amusingly told in the following poem of Mr. Mark Anthony DeWolf Howe:

THE BRISTOL BELL

(1728)

When George the Second in Albion's Isle
Defended the faith, 'twas a weary while
Till a ship that sailed from Rhode Island's shore
Could drop its anchor at home once more.
And the churchmen of Bristol, who'd hoarded well

And sent overseas for an English bell
Had waited full many a month and long
For the cheer of their new-built steeple's song.
But at last the vessel at Newport lay,
And a brave little sloop sailed down the bay
To ferry the bell to Bristol town
That should bless Saint Michael's with wide renown.
Though the brave sloop's men number only two,
Their pride was enough for a galleon's crew,
And it puffed them large with the part they'd play-
For when pride is at work, it works that way.
"The deck is too lowly a place", they said,
"For our glorious cargo, high overhead
We'll hang it, and fling to the winds its peel
To speak for the righteous joy we feel."
So up to the cross-trees the bell they swung,
Forgetting by mere mischance its tongue;
"What matter!" cried brawny Waldron, "I
Will smite it myself, 'neath the arching sky!"
Then aloft he climbed with a mighty sledge
To waken a note from the slumbering edge
Of the Church's treasure, all silent till
The mounting Waldron should prove his skill.
"Give ear, good helmsman!" he cried aloud
As he reached the top of the slender shroud,
And praise to himself for his prowess spoke
And curved his arm for a giant stroke.
D-o-n-g! Glorious tone! How its echoes ran
Round and across the horizon's span!
Did ever a sound so full and clear
Ring in a proud Bristolian's ear!
"Again!" cried the steersman in mad delight,
"Still a lustier note from the metal smite!"
And the answer came, "What you hear below
Bristol shall hear this time I trow!"
Oh, the ponderous blow that descended then-
'Twas past all telling of tongue or pen!
For alack and alas! by ill fortune's whim
It cracked the church bell from top to rim!
Then woe for the pitiful homeward sail,
And the crestfallen heroes glum and pale,

With an eager crowd on the wharf to be met
With naught but a prayer to forgive and forget!
In briefest measure their tale they told,
But they learned a lesson that's never grown old;
When pride, on land, sea, river, or bay,
Is at work, it can work in a direful way.

Undaunted by the fate of their London bell, the parishioners of St. Michael's set about getting another one. Several months they had to wait, but at last it came, and Bristolians rejoiced to hear its sweet tones on the Sunday air. So, too, did the people on Poppasquash, in the scattered farms of that part of the town; but not so much as Mr. Usher, who coming out of his house on what is now Constitution and Wood Streets, on his way to church, would hear in his mind the bells of old England. Little did the S. P. G. Missionary realize that a time was coming in the not distant future, when all that he trusted in of political security would be knocked on the head, and London the center of his universe, would become the capitol of a foreign country, and the commercial rival of an American metropolis.

CHAPTER IV

Part 1.

COLONIAL VESTRY MEETINGS

St. Michael's Church, Bristol, 6th April 1724
Monday in Easter Week

The Parishioners being duly warned to a Convention for choosing Church Officers. ..... were chosen:

Vestrymen	Church Wardens
Col. Henry Mackintosh	Mr. Jabez Howland
Maj. Ebenezer Brenton	Mr. Nathaniel Bosworth
Capt. Thomas Lawton	
Capt. Samuel Little	
Mr. Wm. Monroe	
Mr. Wm. Walker	
Mr. Jabez Howland—Headstone in St. Michael's Close	
Mr. Henry Bragg	
Mr. Obadiah Papillon—Headstone in St. Michael's Close	
Mr. Nathaniel Bosworth	

July 24th 1725

Col. Mackintosh and wife gave an additional Deed of Land to the Church wardens and Vestry of St. Michael's Church in Bristol as the words of the Deed may be seen; so that what was formerly given with this present addition makes a lott of Eighty Six feet in length and Sixty Six feet in Breadth, for the use of the Church of England as by Law of Great Britain established and no otherwise.

March 3rd 1726

At the adjournment was voted that the Church wardens should make application to Mr. Craddock to purchase us a good Bell—near Five Hundred weight, we paying the usual advance, he sells his other goods for.

September 1728

At a meeting of the Church Wardens and Vestry duly warned in the Church,

Whereas upon the 3rd day of March 1726 it was voted to get a good Bell, near Five Hundred weight. The Church Wardens being asked whether they had received any answer from Mr.

Craddock relating to the Bell; Replied they had and he could give no account of it; nor when it should come. Voted, therefore, that application be made to Nathaniel Kay, Esq., of Rhode Island, to procure us a Bell of about Seven or Eight Hundred weight; and the Rev. Mr. Usher is desired to draw up a letter to be sent to Nathaniel Kay, Esq., for that purpose.

Voted that Two Joynt Stools be provided for the use of the Church .

St. John's Day ..... after prayers the Church Wardens and Vestry being desired to tarry, the Rev. Mr. Usher read the letter for the Church Wardens and Vestry to sign in order for sending it to Mr. Kay.

October 20th, 1729

The Parishioners being duly warned and met in the Church. Capt. Lawton and Mr. Nathaniel Bosworth acquainted them that they had received the Bell of Nathaniel Kay, Esq., and paid him Two Hundred and thirty pounds for the same which they delivered to Major Samuel Lindzey and Isaac Ingraham for a safe conveyance in their boat to Bristol. But by an unfortunate accident it was broken.

November 24

The Parishioners being duly warned to meet in the Church, voted to Receive the Bell of Captain Lawton and Mr. Nathaniel Bosworth. Voted that Captain Lawton and Mr. Nathaniel Bosworth should find a casque to put the Bell into and ship it for Boston to Mr. Francis Bourland, Jr. in order to have it sent Home to England.

Voted that Captain Davis be desired to write Mr. Francis Bourland of Boston desiring him to ship the Bell of Bristol Church for London and consign it to Mr. Thomas Sandford of said place by the first convenient opportunity in order to having it new cast. Voted that Captain Lawton and Mr. Nathaniel Bosworth should wait upon Mr. Kay and desire him to write to Mr. Thomas Sandford of London to pay casting said Bell—and Captain Lawton and Mr. Nathaniel Bosworth aforesaid are to give Mr. Kay security for the same.

St. Michael's Church, Bristol, 15th April 1734

Voted, Mr. Gridley Sexton with a salary of Three pounds. Mr. John Ingraham Bell Ringer to be paid by Subscription he performing according to custom.

Voted, that the Church Wardens provide the Church with a

decent Common Prayer Book as soon as possible.

August 12th

The Vestry being duly warned to meet this day, met accordingly. Present: Capt. Davis, Capt. Lawton, Mr. Munroe, Capt. Walker, Mr. Pearse, Mr. Papillon, Mr. Ingraham, Mr. Bosworth, Mr. Geo. Monroe, Mr. Mundy, Mr. Lindal.

Voted, that the Church Wardens be desired to take a view of the Steeple of the Church, and point it if they think it necessary for the preserving it.

Voted, also that Mr. Nathaniel Lindal have liberty of placing a handsome clock in the Tower of the Church, if such a one he can procure.

St. Michael's Church, Bristol, 30th May, 1736

Voted, also, that the Church Wardens be desired to procure Two Thousand of Boards in order to finish off the Gallery. And likewise that they go forward and finish ceiling underneath the Gallery, if they think it proper.

Voted, that Mr. Richard Pearse should have a birth in the Gallery for building a Pew No. 2, he paying for the same to the Church Wardens Eight pounds and such parish dues as from time to time shall be laid on the same.

Voted, that Mr. William Munroe should have ground in the Gallery for building him a Pew, he paying to the Church Wardens, and such Parish dues as from time to time shall be laid on the same.

St. Michael's Church, Bristol, 23rd April, 1739

Monday in Easter Week

Voted, that John Usher, Rector of the Church aforesaid, be paid by his Parishioners for his Service for the present year Eighty pounds exclusive of the strangers money.

Signed John Usher

St. Michael's Church, Bristol, Aug. 7th, 1749

Voted, that Nathaniel Bosworth, Nathaniel Pearse, and Nathaniel Munro, Esq. be a committee to seek redress at the next Town Meeting in Bristol from a burden laid upon the members of the Church of England towards supporting the Town School, and make a report at the next Parish meeting of their Proceedings. Whereas the Committee appointed to return a list of the names of those that attend the Church in Bristol have omitted the doing it, it is voted that Nathaniel Pearse and Nathaniel Munro, Esq. be joined with Nathaniel Bosworth, Esq. as a committee to draw

off a list of the Persons that attend the Church in Bristol and present it to the assessors of the Town.

January 2nd (1750)

At a Parish Meeting the Committee chosen to make application for redress from a burden laid upon the members of the Established Church towards supporting the Town School, made their report, as on file may appear.

1775

At a parish meeting duly warned and met 17th April, 1775.

Voted that Messrs. Nathaniel Munro and Nathaniel Pearse, Jr. be Church Wardens and that Messrs. Joshua Ingraham, William Hoar, John Usher, Richard Pearse and James Munro be Vestrymen for the year ensuing.

At a meeting of the Parishioners in Sept. 1775 duly warned.

Voted, that Captain Joshua Ingraham be Moderator, and that Jno. Usher be Clerk of said meeting, after which the meeting stood adjourned to the 26th inst.

Voted, that Jno. Usher wait on the Rev. Mr. Doyle at Cambridge, and give him an invitation to this Parish upon liking, and that the said Usher's expenses be paid by the Parish . . . The meeting adjourned by several adjournments to October 25th.

CHAPTER IV

PART 2

DEATH OF JOHN USHER

Journal of S.P.G. in London: "A letter from Mr. John Usher Son of the late Missionary at Bristol in Rhode Island, N. E. dated June 15, 1775 acquainted the Society that his Father their Missionary for 52 years past departed this life on the 30th April last, and thanking the Society for the many favours bestowed upon him. As Executor to his Father he shall presume to draw for the Salary which shall be found due. Having been informed that the Society have made it a standing rule to allow the Heirs of a deceased Missionary as a gratuity the sum of 30 pounds sterling, he shall wait the Society's pleasure before he draws for the same.

"Agreed in Opinion that Mr. Usher be acquainted that the Society do not allow any gratuity to the widow or children of Missionaries, except in cases of indigence and distress; and that he be directed to deposit the Library in the Hands of the Church Wardens.

Agreed with the Committee."

The death of John Usher Senior came within a few days of the battles of Lexington and Concord, distant only about 65 miles from Bristol. The old S. P. G. Missionary could not be expected to regard the matter as anything but a terrible calamity. To the British Crown he looked as a pledge of political security, and the maintenance of law and order, to which at his ordination he had vowed obedience. (Note - On the Oath of Allegiance. Every candidate for Holy Orders before he is ordained in the Church of England is required to take an oath of allegiance to the British Sovereign. This is an ecclesiastical oath recognizing that the Crown is the legal Head of the Church of England. Foreigners have taken this oath to obey all legal requirements while living in England. The oath did not apply to citizens of the United States after July 4 1776. This the Tory Clergy did not realize, for had they done so they would have remained in their own country, giving their allegiance to their government., and not leaving their parishioners to shift for themselves. A conspicuous example

of this patriotic attitude was that of the Rev. Dr. White of Philadelphia, Chaplain of Congress in the Revolution, and later the first Bishop of Pennsylvania). His continual teaching of passive obedience and non-resistance made him conspicuous in Bristol, for like many others, he had no realization of the manifest destiny of our great country. We cannot blame him for his life-long attitude. It was for his son and successor to realize that the days of colonial dependence were over, and that a new country was coming to birth, a country in which the American Church would take its own independent place in the Anglican Communion.

October 25th, 1775

At a meeting of the Parishioners, October 25th

Voted, that a Subscription be set on foot for the support of a Minister for Six Months, which was accordingly done. Voted, that Hezekiah Usher purchase Shingles and Nails to repair the Church forthwith and be paid out of the School money. Voted, likewise, that Messrs. Nathaniel Pearse, William Pearse, and John Usher be a Committee to wait on the Rev'd Mr. Doyle and agree with him for Six Months, on as reasonable terms as can be generously done.

November 26th, 1775

At a Parish Meeting duly warned—Two of the Committee, viz; William Pearse and John Usher, the other one being sick, Report as follows—that they had waited on Mr. Doyle and agreed with him for Six Months with an addition of Twenty Dollars to the Subscription if agreeable to the Trustees of the School money, that it should come out of said fund. Mr. Doyle's Board coming out of said Subscription at the rate of Two Dollars per week—which Report was approved by said Parish.

Easter Monday, March 31st, 1777

At a meeting of as many of the Parishioners of St. Michael's Church as the Distressing Day would admit of—it was unanimously voted that the Church Wardens and Vestry be rechosen and stand as in the preceding year.

John Usher, Clerk, as per vote.

April 20th, 1778

At a meeting of as many of the Parishioners of St. Michael's Church as could be conveniently convened from the distraction of the times, it being Easter Monday, it was unanimously voted

that the Church Wardens and Vestry be rechosen and stand as in the preceding year.

John Usher, Clerk, as per vote

March 27th, 1780

At a meeting of as many of the Parishioners of the Church as could be conveniently convened from the Distressing Day,—it being Easter Monday, it was voted that the Church Wardens and Vestry be chosen as follows—viz.—

Vestrymen	Church Wardens
Nathaniel Pearse	Jno. Usher
Josh'a Ingraham	Nath'l Pearse, Jr.
Wm. Pearse	
Wm. Hoar	
Richard Pearse	John Usher, Clerk, as per vote
Hez. Usher	and also Moderator of said Meeting
Sion Martindale	
Aaron Bourne	

THE REV. AND MRS. ABRAHAM L. CLARKE

The Rt. Reverend
SAMUEL SEABURY
Who ordained the second
Reverend John Usher

An early view of the interior showing the tablets.

The interior of the Church as it looks today.

Photo by Henry A. Curtis

Two flagons. Part of the Nathaniel Kay bequest. One bears the maker's mark (BB) for Benjamin Brenton of Newport, R. I. (1686 - 1740). The other is marked (IR) unidentified. Both pieces bear interesting inscriptions.

Photo by Henry A. Curtis

Chalice and paten. Both pieces bear the same inscription: "A legacy of Nathaniel Kay, Esqr., for the use of the Church of England in Bristol, 1734." The chalice bears the maker's mark (IR). The paten is decorated with a gadrooned border and has the Maker's mark EW for Edward Winslow of Boston, (1669-1753).

Photo by Henry A. Curtis

Baptismal bowl with dolphin handles. A seventeenth century piece used in the time of John Usher. Unmarked.

Photo by Henry A. Curtis

The Baptismal Basin is inscribed "The Gift of Isaac Royall, Esqr., to St. Michael's Church in Bristol, 1747." It is engraved with the donor's coat-of-arms and motto "Rectore Puro." The Maker's mark is T. Edwards. Isaac Royall married Elizabeth Mackintosh, granddaughter of a founder of St. Michael's Church.

Photo by Henry A. Curtis

Pair of loving cups with strap handles. Dated 1806. Acquired in the time of the Rev. Mr. Griswold.

CHAPTER IV

PART 3

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH DESTROYED BY THE BRITISH

May 25th, 1778 dawned fair and warm in Bristol. There was hardly a cloud in the sky, and as the day lengthened the heat strengthened. Looking west towards Poppasquash the waves in the harbor shimmered in the sun's rays, while down the bay the mirage at Sandy Point on Prudence was clearly seen. On Hope and Thames Streets groups of people were seen talking excitedly together, while in front of St. Michael's Church Mr. John Usher and Mr. Nathaniel Bosworth were having an animated conversation. Rumors were flying round that three British frigates had been seen off Poppasquash headed for Warren. "They mean trouble", said Mr. Usher. "Yes", replied Mr. Bosworth, "lucky our powder is stored in a good safe place, under the Meeting House." "I be greatly feared the lobster-backs will not be bought off by a gift of sheep, as I gave them in '75", said Simeon Potter joining the group.

Presently on the still spring air there broke the sound of gun fire to the north. "That's in Warren", said Mr. Usher. Immediately the little groups of people joined together, as the sounds of the guns increased. "Beware ye rebels", broke a harsh voice nearby, "ye will soon know what it means to raise rebellion against the King." But before the people could lay their hands on him, the Tory had slipped away from them.

Soon the sound of a galloping horse was heard coming from the north. The rider hove in sight, it was Amos Gorham. "The British are coming", he cried. "Get to your homes, the enemy means mischief." Even as he said these words a house burst into flames. Bristol was on fire.

Having been landed from the British ships near Warren, the marine detachment under the command of Lieut. Colonel Campbell, a ruffian who disgraced the uniform he wore, were under orders to seize the powder of the American forces and to destroy Bristol. Marching along the road from Warren, they were soon joyfully carrying out their orders, to the obvious disgust of some of the officers, as the houses of the little village went up in smoke.

Without taking the trouble to investigate coming to St. Michael's Church, Colonel Campbell supposed that here was where the "rebel" ammunition was stored, and immediately ordered the destruction of the church. On being informed of the true nature of the building, he sent an officer into the church to investigate. But it was too late, the flames had already done their dreadful work. A crowd was gathering near the fire, and fearing violence the British colonel threatened to fire on the citizens. "Disperse, ye bloody rebels", he cried out, but was answered with jeers and cat-calls.

As the sun went down over Poppasquash, a sad sight met the eyes of Bristolians. The little town was a mass of ruins. Houses which had been the homes for many years of colonists, were mere shells. standing like ghosts among the trees. Here and there women and children were picking up what they could find of their possessions, while the sobs of children testified to what they found of their playthings burnt to a cinder. Groups of men with muskets in their hands were asking why had the red-coats been allowed to depart so easily. To this there was no answer, except to say that the powder which the enemy had come to destroy, was safe and sound in the hands of the Patriots, thanks to its safe keeping in the basement of the Congregational Church on Bradford Street.

Is it surprising then that when peace came at last, St. Michael's Church in Bristol rebuilt and refurnished on the old site, was a leader in patriotism in Rhode Island, and that its walls echoed to the prayers for George Washington, our first President? So the old St. Michael's of the Church of England passed out, in giving birth to the new St. Michael's of the American Episcopal Church.

CHAPTER V

DOCUMENTS

Last Will and Testament of Nathaniel Kay, Esq. In The Name of God. Amen

I, Nathaniel Kay of Rhode Island in New England, and being in good health and sound mind for which I Bless Almighty God and knowing the uncertainty of my life do bequeath my Body to be buried in the Churchyard under or near my Sisters Tomb if I dye in said Island . . . . . .

And as for my Estate reall and personall I Bequeath and Dispose of in the following manner . . . . . .

In the first place I give and bequeath to my well beloved wife, Ann Kay, Two Thousand pounds Lawfull current Money of New England and all the Furniture of my House, viz; Plate, Bedding, Woolins, Linens, Glasses, Slaves, Tables, Chairs, Chaise, and every parcel of that sort as if particularly mentioned, excepting my Books only. She may take what Bibles and Prayer Books she pleaseth, and the use of my dwelling House, of my Chaise House and Stable as long as she shall choose. Item. I give and Bequeath unto the Four Churches of England-in my Collection, viz; that of Newport, Bristol, Providence and Kingstown Narragansett. Mr. McSparran, Minister, each of them One Hundred pounds lawfull current money of New England to be disposed of by the Minister and Church Wardens of the four respective churches for the time being to furnish each of them with a piece of Plate for the Holy Communion.

And I give One Hundred pounds of the same currency for the use of the poor of the Church in Newport and as the Minister and Church Wardens thereof shall think most fitting. . . . . .

Item. I give and bequeath my Farm at Bristol unto the Minister and Church Wardens and the Vestry of the Church of England in Bristol, or the major part of them for the time being, that is to say upon trust and confidence and to the interests and purposes, Benefits and use of a School forever to teach Ten poor boys their grammar and arithmetic gratis. And I give Two Hundred pounds current money of New England to the Trustees aforesaid to Build a School House whom I empower to choose and appoint

a Master for the said School whom I would have Episcopally ordained and be assistant to the Church of England Minister in the Town. . . . . .

Item. I give and bequeath my Dwelling House and Coach House to my wife during her natural life, after which I give and Bequeath, both with my Lotts of Land in Rhode Island and Four Hundred pounds in currency of New England to Build a School House, to the Minister of the Church of England, Mr. James Honeyman, and the Church Wardens and Vestry for the time being, that is to say upon trust and confidence and to the intents and purposes Benefit and use of a School, to teach ten poor Boys their Grammar and Mathematicks, gratis; and to appoint a Master at all times as occasion or vacancy may happen, who shall be Episcopally Ordained and assist the Minister Episcopall of the Town of Newport in some proper office as they shall think most useful.

Item. I give the Remainder of my Estate both Reall and Personall after my Debts, Legacies and Funerall expenses are paid unto my very good Wife, Mrs. Ann Kay, whom I hope will be a very good Benefactor to the School, and whom I constitute and appoint to be my sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament hereby Revoking and making void all other former Wills and Testaments by me made: In witness of all which I have, hereunto set my Hand and Seal the Seventh Day of March, in the Sixth year of the Reign of Our Sovereign Lord King George the Second, A.D. 1732/3.

Nathaniel Kay (Seal)

Signed, Sealed, Published and Declared by the said Nathaniel Kay to be his Last Will and Testament in Presence of Us, Sion Arnold, Mary Arnold, Sarah S. B. Bush. Her mark . . . .

The Bishop Seabury Ordination Certificate of John Usher, Jr.

Samuel, by divine permission, Bishop of Connecticut and Rhode Island. To all whom it may concern, Know ye, That at an Ordination held under the protection of Almighty God, in Kings Church in Providence in Rhode Island, on the Thirty-first day of July, one thousand, seven hundred, and ninety-three, We, the Bishop above mentioned, did solemnly admit and promote our beloved in Christ, John Usher (of whose morals, learning, sound doctrine and diligence we were fully satisfied) unto the Holy Order of Priests; and him the said John Usher did then and there rightly and canonically ordain Priest, He having first in our pres-

ence made and subscribed the declaration required of him. In Testimony whereof we have hereunto affixed our Episcopal Seal at New London in Connecticut the 30th day of October, 1793, and in the ninth year of our Consecration.

Samuel Bp. Connect. & Rho. Isl.
Seal

Letter of Simeon Potter to James DeWolf
Swanzey, Sunday, April 10, 1803

Sir:

You seemed very privet when hear yesterday you never informed me that on Easter Monday the Parish of St. Michels Church was going to vote Mr. Usher out and Mr. Clark in as Rectuar of sd Church. But you and they are mistaken that lays with the Bishop. I expected that Everything was to be settled in an amiable manner. Depend if you are going to force things contrary to Mr. Usher's wish — youl luse more friends than youl gain therefore let the matter be adiorned for one month, that will bring it after proven.

Your to Serve
Simeon Potter

Petition to sell Church Farm Poppasquash

To the Hon'ble the Gen. Assembly of the State of Rhode Island to be holden at Newport in the County of Newport on..... of May A. D. 1800.

The petition of Simeon Potter, John Usher and Abraham L. Clark, a Committee appointed by and in behalf of the Minister, Church-Wardens and Vestry of St. Michael's Church in Bristol in said State—respectfully sheweth that Nathaniel Kay, Esq. heretofore of Newport, aforesaid in and by his last Will and Testament devized to the Minister, Church-Wardens and Vestry of the Church aforesaid and to their successors a certain Farm lying in Bristol, containing about 1,050 acres and which has since been called and distinguished by the name of the Church Farm, for the purpose of instructing ten poor boys in grammar and arithmetic, and empowered the said Trustees to appoint a Schoolmaster who should have received Episcopal Ordination and be an Assistant of the Episcopal Minister of said Town, that the Rents and issues of said Farm have been as far as has been practicable, appropriated according to the intent of said Donation, that the Dwelling House and Barn on said farm were burnt and destroyed during the War, and said farm for some years past, has been rented for $250 per annum, that owing the said Farm being

constantly rented and almost destitute of buildings, the same has become much impoverished—your Petitioners would further shew that with the annual rent of the Farm it has been found impracticable. to procure a person possessing all the qualifications pointed out in said will as sufficient to the teaching a School, of Episcopal Ordination and capable of being an Assistant to the Minister of St. Michael's Church. That the Trustees on inquiry have ascertained that the said Farm will sell for a good price, insomuch that the annual interest of the Proceeds will considerably exceed double the amount of the annual rent. That these said Trustees impressed with the conviction that the benevolent interest of the Testator could not be literally executed without a sale of said Farm, and that by the application of the annual interest to the same objects the said intention can be completely effectuated, they have your Petitioners a Committee to apply to this Hon. Assembly for authority to sell said Farm at the best price that can be obtained, and apply and to invest the Proceeds of said sale in bank stock, to the end that the annual dividends or moneys therefrom shall remain sacred by appropriated to the Pious and Benevolent uses intended by the aforenamed very liberal Benefactor in this aforesaid devise.

Wherefore your Petitioners, humbly pray, that your Honours will be pleased to authorize your Petitioners to make sale of said Estate for the purposes aforementioned and under such regulations and in your wisdom shall appear meet — And as in duty bound will ever Pray.

Simeon Potter)
John Usher) Committee
Abraham L. Clarke)

The Committee appointed to consider and report what is expedient for the Gen. Assembly to do on the preceding Petition, beg leave to report that having duly considered thereof they are of opinion that the Prayer of said Petition ought not to be granted, and that the Petitioners have leave to withdraw their Petition, all which is submitted by David Leonard Banner, Walter Channing, and John Throop Child.

Final Work of Mr. Usher

Few have persevered as Mr. Usher did, under so many conflicting circumstances, keeping together a parish for eleven years by lay reading, at a time when the strongest opposition was exhibited toward the Church from the mistaken idea, prevailing

immediately after the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, that there was a connection between the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States and the Established Church of England.

During the time of Mr. Usher's reading the Congregation was frequently benefitted in the administration of the ordinances, by the clergy from Providence and Newport. The Rev. Mr. Graves, of Providence, thus officiated from 1780 to 1784; and, in 1785, the Rev. Mr. Badger administered the ordinances, the next year the Rev. Mr. Wheeler being present. In the latter part of this year, the new church was so far completed that it was opened for public worship, and the Rev. Mr. Graves administered the ordinance of Baptism for the first time in the new church. The Rev. Mr. Smith, also, of Newport, frequently attended.

In 1791, twenty-five persons were confirmed by Bishop Seabury, and in 1793, Mr. Usher so long the faithful and devoted friend and reader to this Church, received Orders, and officiated with success till the year 1800, when, at his earnest desire, being now nearly eighty years of age, the Rev. Abraham Clarke was settled here, the Rev. Mr. Usher often officiating at the baptisms, marriages and funerals of his old and long-tried friends. In 1797, twenty-nine persons were confirmed by Bishop Bass. Difficulties soon arose after the settlement of Mr. Clarke, and he continued his labours here but about three years, when, in 1803, the Rev. Alexander Viets Griswold became the rector of the parish.

The same year, the Rev. Mr. Usher, then eighty-two years of age, prepared to render up to his Divine Master, the long account of his labours on earth; and if any man could render up his account with joy, Mr. Usher could certainly do so. He was the first infant Episcopally baptized in Bristol, and devoted his long life almost entirely to the interests and welfare of the Church, and in circumstances frequently the most trying to his faith in God's protecting and sustaining care. But at the closing period of his protracted life a brighter day was dawning upon the Church of his love, and he committed his little and beloved flock, with most heartfelt satisfaction and perfect confidence, to the parochial charge of the Rev. Mr. Griswold, the new rector. How far he was justified in that confidence, the account of the succeeding prosperity of the church will abundantly prove.

The Rev. Mr. Usher was gathered to his fathers in July 1804, aged eighty-two years, and his remains with those of his father, are interred under the chancel of the church.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY DAYS OF THE REPUBLIC

The days that succeeded the Revolution were important for St. Michael's because they saw the settlement of Mr. John Usher, Jr. as the layreader, until his ordination to the Priesthood by Bishop Seabury in 1793, in St. John's Church, Providence. (See ordination certificate Chapter V.) Then still called King's Church.

In 1786 a new church was built on the site of the old one. The town of Bristol was fast becoming an important seaport, and a trade with Africa was beginning to shape up, about which more will be said later on. It is interesting to note that an attempt to place someone else in Mr. Usher's position as Rector of St. Michael's was defeated, and that a fiery letter on the subject was written by Colonel Simeon Potter to Mr. James D'Wolfe. (See Chapter V.)

About this time a petition was circulated in the parish to sell the Church Farm on Poppasquash given by Nathaniel Kay of Newport for a school for poor boys. (See Chapter V).

We must now for a brief moment, come down to modern times. Tufton Street in Westminster, London, England is a little narrow one-way street, leading out of the great court-yard bounded on one side by Church House and on the other by Westminster School. It is in this little street that the Society for the Propagation in Foreign Parts has its headquarters. It is a large building, very modern in equipment, with its chapel on the second floor. The chapel is simple but beautiful, and on the left of the Altar is a wooden box containing palm leaves, the very ones found on the body of Bishop Patterson after his murder in the South Sea Islands in 1872. From this chapel the missionaries of S. P. G. are sent forth all over the world.

Near to the chapel is the library, and next to that room is the Archives Room, the treasure house of the Society. Here under the capable hands of the custodian are kept on file the records of the Society from its beginning in 1702 to the present day. It was not difficult to find the story of St. Michael's Church in Bristol in colonial days. It was the story largely of John Usher who for 52 years bore witness to the truth of the Anglican Church and the missionary labours of the S. P. G. The Revolutionary War, of

course, terminated the Society's work in New England, and in most cases the clergy considering themselves bound by their oath of loyalty to the Crown, fled to Nova Scotia, leaving their parishioners to shift for themselves. This was not the case in Bristol, for Mr. Usher dying a few weeks after the battles of Lexington and Concord, left the parish to the charge of the Vestry, who with much courage and in the face of tremendous difficulties, carried on the best way they could.

CHAPTER VII

BISHOP GRISWOLD

In the death of the second John Usher, the old connection with colonial Bristol passes away, and a new set-up takes its place. We come now to the rectorship of Alexander Viets Griswold. The following partial account of this pastorate is taken from "The History of Bristol, R. I." by Wilfred H. Munro — Chapter XXXV: "Alexander Viets Griswold was born in Simsbury, Hartford County, Conn., April 22, 1766 . . . . In 1794 he determined to become a clergyman of the Episcopal Church, and was that year admitted as a candidate for Orders. In the following June he was ordained as deacon, and in October 1795, was advanced to the priesthood by Bishop Seabury. His first charge was in Litchfield County, Conn. Part of his support was earned by labor upon a farm. In the harvest time he often worked as a day laborer for seventy-five cents per day. He was a man of mighty frame, and herculean strength; one of his day's works was worth as much as that of two common men." Many are the incidents that have been transmitted concerning that humble life.

"On a general view of the first ten years of his ministry, Mr. Griswold is found to have acted in various capacities: As a teacher of the district school in winter; as a day laborer among his parishioners in the summer; and as a sharer in all the lowly occupations and cares of a country life among the retired hills of Connecticut; as well as in the proper duties of his office as a Christian teacher and spiritual pastor to his flock. He shunned nothing in truth that could bring him into most familiar and unguarded intercourse with his people.

"In 1803 he visited Bristol, not with any idea of leaving his post in Connecticut, but simply to see a country that was new to him, and to obtain a little relaxation. The parish of St. Michael was then without a rector, and he was invited to take charge of it. He declined the invitation. The prospects of increased usefulness, or of personal advantage, did not seem to him to warrant the change. The parish was offered to him a second time, and he again refused it. In his autobiography he says: 'I then supposed I should hear no more from Bristol. But, about the middle of the following winter, to my surprise, one of their most respectable

parishioners, Mr. William Pearse, a warden of the church, appeared at my house with still more pressing solicitations that I should take the charge of that destitute parish; urging many reasons why it was my duty to consent to the change. This affected me seriously, and there seemed to be in it a call of Divine Providence. To leave a people who had been so uniformly kind to me, and all of whom, without exception, I had reason to believe, would be grieved at my leaving them, excited in my mind a painful struggle, which they only who have been called to the like trial can realize. It is sufficient to say that with fear and trembling I gave my consent, and in May 1804, one year after my first visit there, I was in Bristol with my family. Bishop Jarvis had given his consent that I should spend a few years there, though at the same time expressing a wish that I should, after that, return to his diocese.'

"It was through the liberality of James DeWolf that the transfer was accomplished. A small vessel belonging to Mr. DeWolf was by him sent to Hartford, the port upon the Connecticut River nearest to Harwinton, to transport Mr. Griswold and his household to Bristol. Harwinton was distant some twenty miles from the river. Capt. "Nor 'West" John DeWolf, who had not yet earned his famous sobriquet was sent in charge of the vessel.

"Mr. Griswold found about twenty-five families connected with the Church. There were not quite as many communicants. The town numbered, perhaps, two thousand inhabitants. It was full of energy and physical vigor. Its wharves were lined with vessels from the West Indian ports, and it was just beginning to engage in the more extensive commerce with Europe and the East, that afterwards made it so famous. But very little interest was felt in religious matters. In some respects, therefore, the change was not a promotion for the new rector. He had left three large parishes, with more than two hundred communicants, to assume the spiritual direction of one with hardly one-tenth of that number. Yet the removal seems to have been providentially brought about. Unseen forces were at work in Bristol, and the presence of Mr. Griswold was as potent as any other influence in producing the change in the moral atmosphere of the town. The annual income (mostly derived from the Kay bequest) of the rector of the parish was at this time about six hundred dollars per annum—too small a sum to support the large family of Mr. Griswold, in a place where the expenses of living were larger than

in most towns in New England. He was therefore obliged to eke out his income by teaching a select school. The same life of self-denial and lowly toil seemed before him that had been his lot in Connecticut.

"The new rector found that in some respects his parish was very different from his old field of labor. During the first years of his ministry political excitement was unusually fierce throughout the country, and from many of the "Orthodox" pulpits fiery sermons were delivered, that discussed in the freest manner the party questions that were daily arising. Into this discussion Mr. Griswold never entered. Even in familiar conversation it was exceedingly difficult to ascertain his political views. In his pulpit such themes were never alluded to.

"His early preaching, like that which generally prevailed in our Church at that time, was rather more moral than evangelical; that is, devoted more to the illustration and enforcement of the moral precepts and virtues of Christianity, than to the development and application of the spiritual truths and doctrines of the Gospel. In Connecticut more than in any other State was there exceeding intolerance in the matter of religious belief. The Calvinists of that State sneered at the Episcopalians as formalists and bigots; the Episcopalians looked upon the Calvinists as fanatics. From the pulpits of both religious bodies sermons were delivered that dwelt almost entirely upon sectarian divisions and matters of controversy.

In 1809 he was invited to the rectorship of St. Michael's Church, Litchfield, Connecticut. Both the situation and the terms upon which it was offered were very favorable; he determined to accept it. He was diverted from his purpose by an occurrence, to him totally unexpected, and in his view, exceedingly providential. On the twenty-ninth day of May 1810, the delegates from the churches in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Vermont, met together in the city of Boston to elect a bishop for the eastern diocese. Their choice fell upon Alexander V. Griswold. Mr. Griswold was one of the delegates from Rhode Island, but no thought of his election to the office seems to have entered his mind. When the idea was suggested to him that he was to be chosen, he was thrown into the wildest agitation, and absolutely refused to entertain it. When the vote of the Convention was made known he was completely overpowered by his emotions, and after a few moments' pause rose and refused to accept the

proferred honor. He appeared overwhelmed with a sense of his own unfitness. Only after the earnest solicitation of the clergy in the eastern diocese was he prevailed upon to assume the responsibilities of the position. May 20, 1811, he was consecrated bishop in Trinity Church, New York City."

In the summer of 1812 occurred an extraordinary revival of religion in Bristol, which is best described in the words of Bishop Griswold himself.

"In the year 1812, there was in Bristol an awakened attention to the subject of religion, which was very wonderful, and the like of which I had never before witnessed. It commenced among the members of my parish, when no such thing was looked for, nor indeed thought of. No unusual efforts had been made with any view to such an excitement. My administering of confirmation in the parish a few months previously had not improbably some effect. My recent ordination to the Episcopate was the means of awakening my own mind to more serious thoughts of duty as a minister of Christ; and, in consequence, I had, no doubt, with more earnest zeal preached 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' The change which I first noticed was the appearance of increased seriousness in the congregation; especially in leaving the church after service. There was little or no laughing, or merry salutation among the people; neither talking of worldly things. After the benediction and a minute of private prayer, they retired silent and thoughtful. Some soon began to express a religious concern respecting their spiritual state, and were anxious to know 'what they should do to be saved.'

"I soon found that the number of such inquirers had increased to about thirty; and in a very short time the awakening was general throughout the town and was very wonderful. Very much to my regret, the number of communicants had hitherto been small, —but about forty; and yet not withstanding the very zealous efforts of those of other denominations to draw the converts to their respective communions, a large number of adults (forty-four) were baptized, and a hundred were added to my communion of whom more than half had before been accustomed to attend worship in other places or in no place. These converts were not encouraged in ranting, or in any enthusiastic raptures; nor did they incline to any extravagance; but gladly hearkened to the words of truth and soberness, and very few of them afterwards 'turned from the holy commandments delivered unto them.' "

"Of the effects of this awakening upon the parish, Dr. Tyng, who became a resident of Bristol seven years later, writes as follows: 'The revival of 1812 consolidated and established the parish of Bristol as one of the most flourishing and truly Christian Churches in the diocese. It gave it a reputation and an influence among the Episcopal Churches of New England, as distinct and marked as the Church of North Hampton, under the ministry of Jonathan Edwards. But unlike that Church, its conservative Episcopacy kept it from all dissentions, and its inwrought submission to its venerated and faithful pastor, established it in complete unity of faith and feeling among the Christian people who constituted the Church of God therein. Never, perhaps, was the conserving influence of Episcopal principles, institutions and ordinances, more remarkably and honorably displayed."

Bishop Griswold was criticized by some of the Massachusetts clergy for acting at variance with the traditions and customs of the Episcopal Church. That this criticism was unjust Dr. Tyng says "of all the men in our Church, Bishop Griswold was intensely an Episcopalian,—an Episcopalian born and bred. All his habits, tastes and convictions, were on the side of his own Church, and in favor of its ministeries and forms, its liturgies and articles."

"When Dr. Tyng commenced his life in Bristol, in 1819, he thought he had never before seen a more flourishing church. Sixty years afterwards he writes, 'a more really flourishing church I have never seen since.' The cares of the Bishop's large diocese weighed heavily upon him, but not on this account did he neglect the welfare of the parish to which he had become so tenderly attached. Dr. Tyng thus describes it:-

'In the opening of the year 1820 a new and very wonderful scene and experience was presented to me in this work of my youthful ministry. Bristol was visited with a very remarkable revival of religion, the manifest work of the spirit of God. At this time there had been but little in the previous autumn to indicate it. Our weekly meetings had not been largely attended in the preceding months, partly perhaps owing to the weather, but more to the spirit of worldliness which had been spreading abroad. On the last precedent Friday evening, the regular week not twenty persons were present in the school room in which the meetings were held. The aspect was very discouraging. On the succeeding Sunday evening, the Bishop, after preaching twice in the day, was taken ill in the evening service, and was unable to

complete his sermon. The effect of this sudden interruption was very solemn and impressive. He was assisted slowly to his house by some of his friends. The residue of the congregation were gathered in small companies for mutual expression around the church. As I came out of the church, I stopped where one such company were assembled around a young woman as if she were sick. On approaching the place, I was called to her as one in deep spiritual distress. This proved to be the first drop of a shower.

'The next morning to this Sabbath was probably occupied in every family with thought and conversation about the events which had occurred on this evening. The day revealed an extensive, almost an universal interest and influence, awakened among the people. The general conversation became directed to the one subject of religious truth and teaching. As we mingled in our common acquaintance, this change of general feeling among the people was displayed in a very remarkable manner. Succeeding days indicated the same feeling still increasing and extending. The widespread earnestness among the church people demanded an assembling for the special consideration of the subject, and made them unwilling to wait until the regular weekly meeting on Friday evening. We therefore appointed one for Thursday evening in a private house (S. W. corner of Church and Hope Streets) opposite the church.

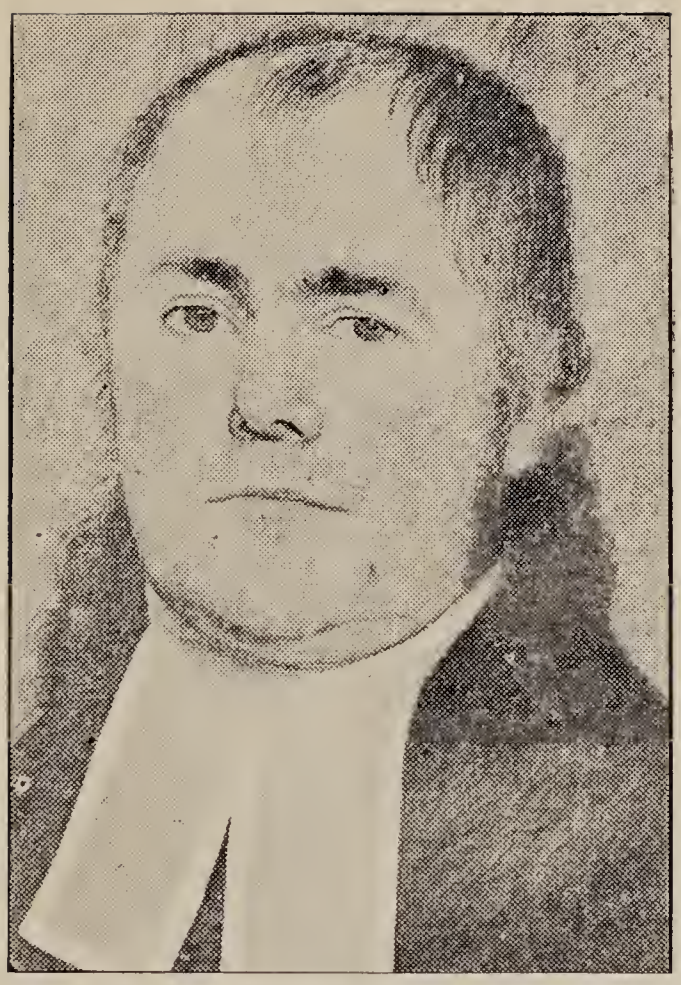
'It was with unbounded surprise that I went into the house at the hour appointed. It was crowded in every room, stair-case and entry, as if some unusually crowded funeral were there. But for ministering to these people, hungry for the bread of life, I was there alone. They had placed a Bible and a Prayer Book on the first landing of the stairs. The people were crowded above me and below me, as far as my eye could reach, in the most eager attention to the Word. It was the most solemn assembly, I had ever seen, and its impression upon my mind and memory was overwhelming and abiding. But this was the commencement of months of work of a similar description; and from this day we had a similar meeting appointed for every evening. These were held in various rooms and houses throughout the town. The evening meetings were usually held in the Academy Hall (N.E. corner High and Church Streets, where Byfield School stands). My whole time for about three months was given up to this one work. Three times every day I was engaged in addressing different assemblies in different parts of the town and of the surrounding

country, and in conversing with awakened and anxious persons connected with these meetings.

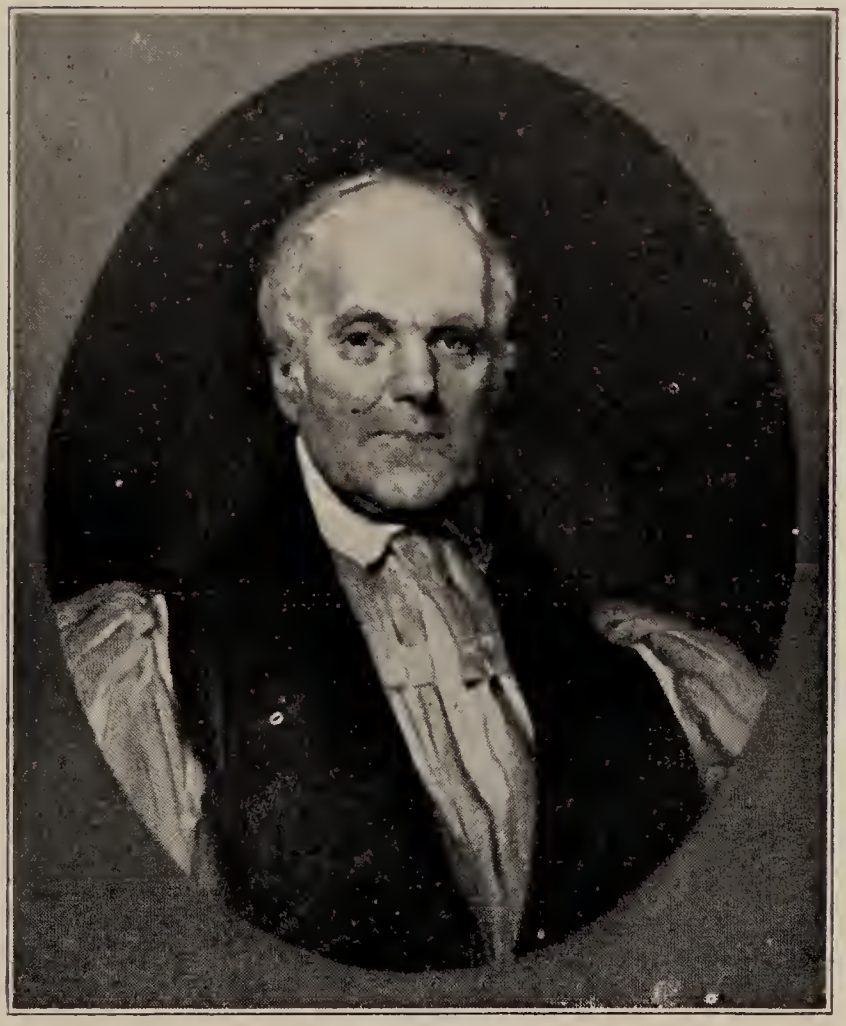
'Such a scene in human society as Bristol then displayed, I had never imagined. The whole town was given up to this one work. The business of the world was for a time suspended. The stores were in many instances closed, as if the whole week were a Sabbath. The general thought of the people seemed to be devoted to the one great purpose of the soul's salvation. The reality and depth of the impression were proved by the large number of persons who became truly the followers of the Lord Jesus. During the most of this period the Bishop was confined to his house by sickness. As soon as he was able to be abroad, a confirmation was appointed in the church.'

"More than one hundred persons were confirmed as a result of this revival. As in the former case in 1812, the work which St. Michael's was doing quickly spread throughout the town, and the other congregations received equally large accessions. From other towns came crowds of people to gaze upon the scenes that were daily presented. From Fall River a packet brought a full load of sight-seers. The voyage was prompted only by curiosity, but when the hour came for the return of the vessel the captain waited in vain for his passengers. They, too, had yielded to the wonderful influences of the hour, and had joined the throng of worshippers. The next day the most of them went back, no longer scoffers but penitents.

"For nine years longer Bishop Griswold continued to reside in Bristol. Almost as soon as he had been consecrated, he had been advised and besought to take up his abode in a more central location, from which he could more easily reach all the large parts of his large diocese. But the old town was exceedingly dear to him. When he removed from Harwinton to Bristol he took with him a wife and eight beautiful children. When he removed from Bristol to Salem, all but one of them were dead. In the churchyard, just behind the chancel (removed long ago to Juniper Hill) were eight white marble tombstones. There lay the wife of his youth (Bishop Griswold was twice married), and there were sleeping three of the children who had been born to him in Bristol. Is it not wonderful that he clung to the place with all the strength of his nature, and resisted for so long a time the temptations that were offered to induce him to remove from it. In 1830 he removed to Salem and assumed the rectorship of St. Peter's Church." He died in Boston in 1843.



The Reverend ALEXANDER
VIETS GRISWOLD

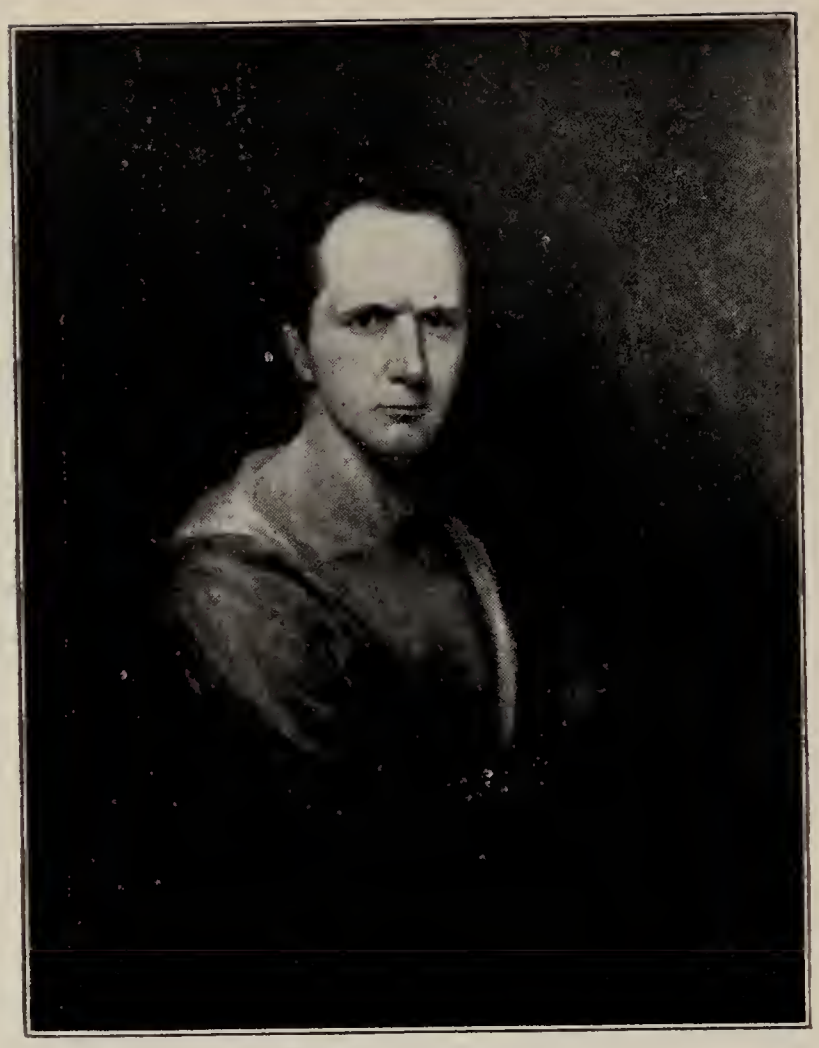


BISHOP
ALEXANDER V. GRISWOLD
Picture from "Bristol, R. I." by permission of M. A. DeWolfe Howe.

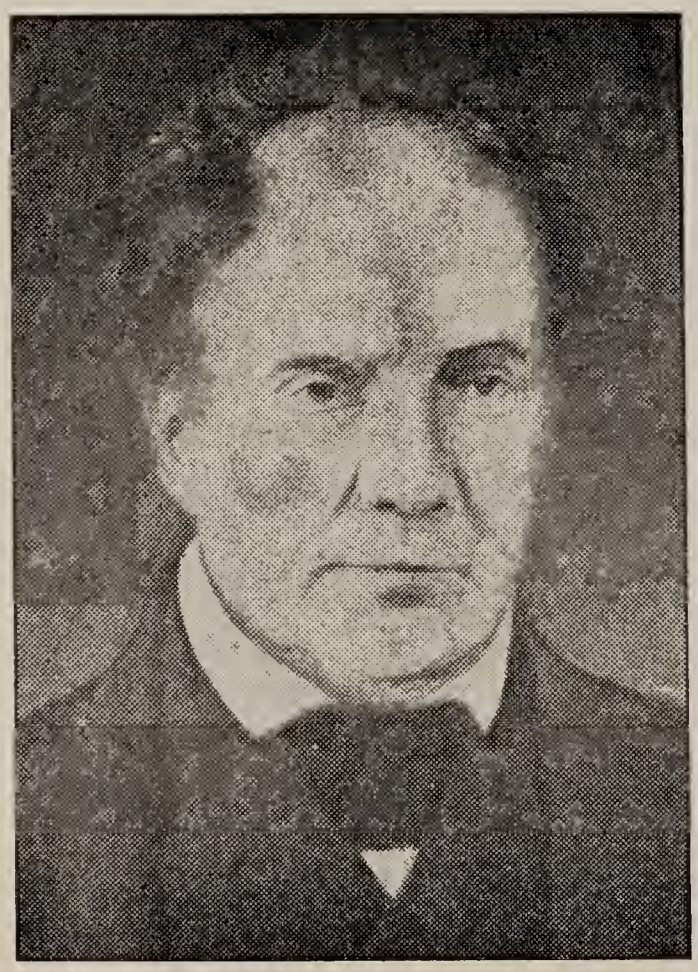
An old picture of St. Michael's Church showing the spire which originally surmounted the tower. The present structure was built from plans furnished by Saeltzer & Valk of New York, by George Ricker of Newark, New Jersey. The consecration took place in 1860.

Photo by Henry A. Curtis

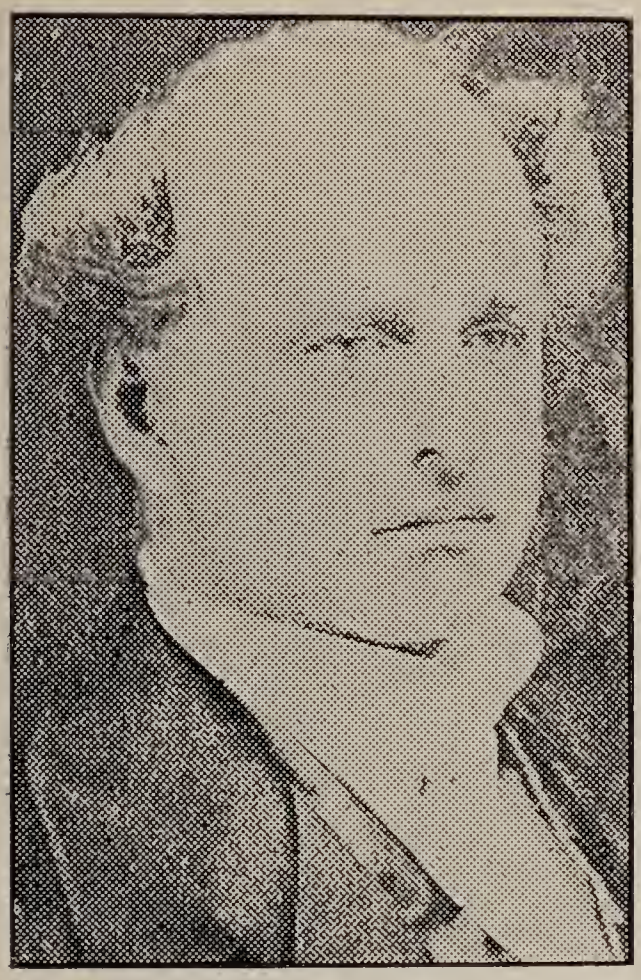
A recent photograph of St. Michael's. The spire was removed in 1891 and replaced with the belfry.



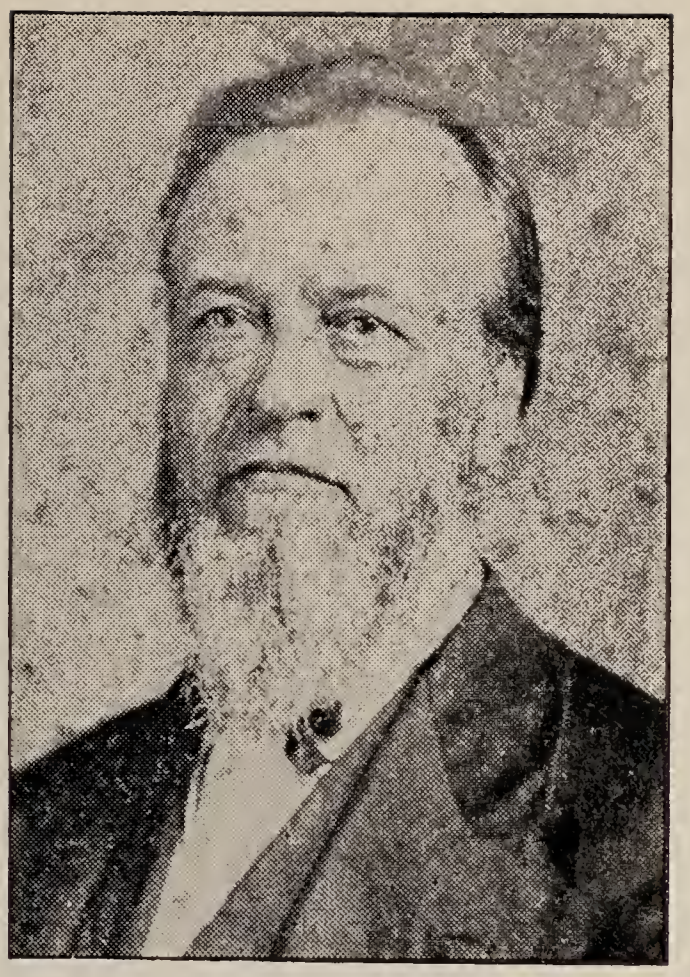
The Reverend
JOHN BRISTED
As a young man
Picture from "Bristol, R. I." by permission of M. A. DeWolfe Howe.



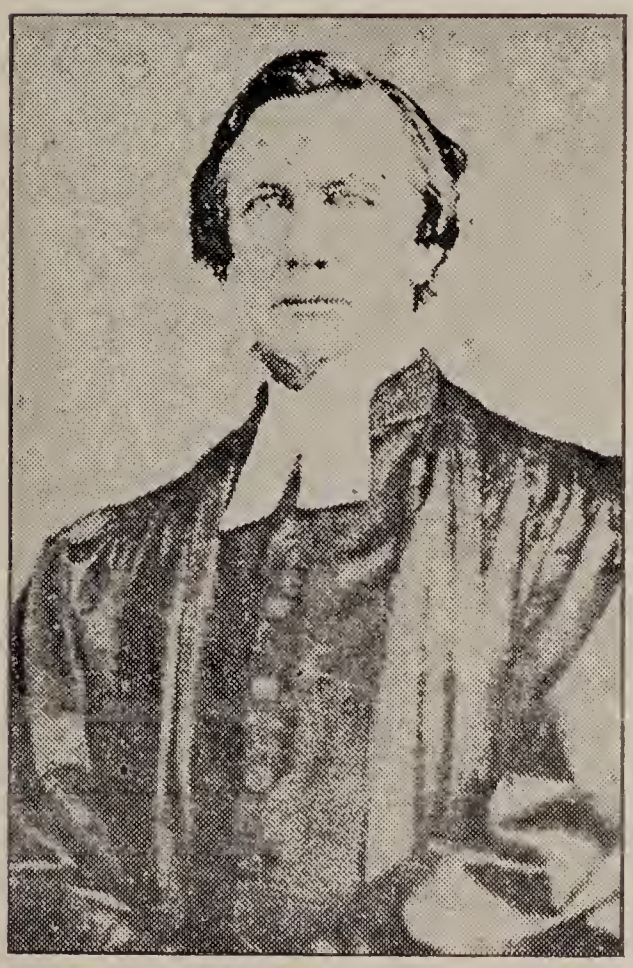
The Reverend
JOHN BRISTED



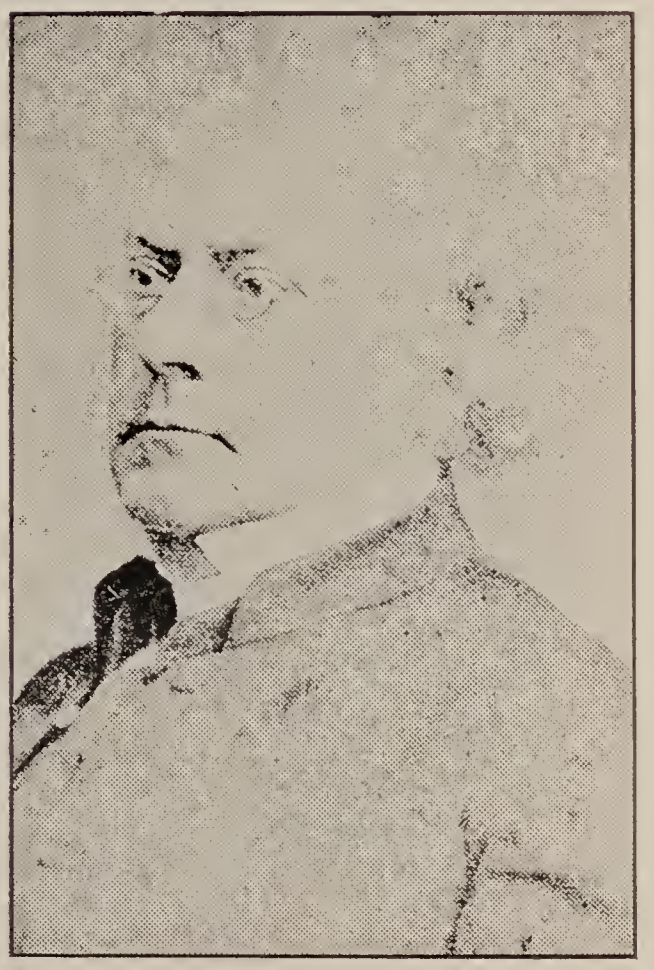
The Reverend
JAMES WELCH COOKE



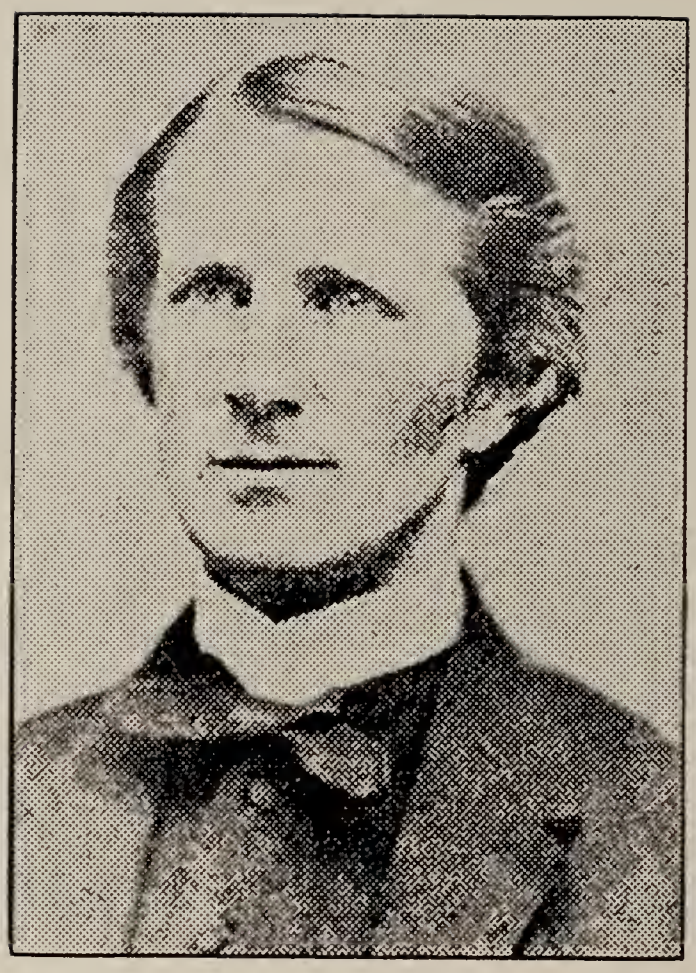
The Reverend
JOSEPH TRAPNELL, JR.



The Reverend
WILLIAM STOWE

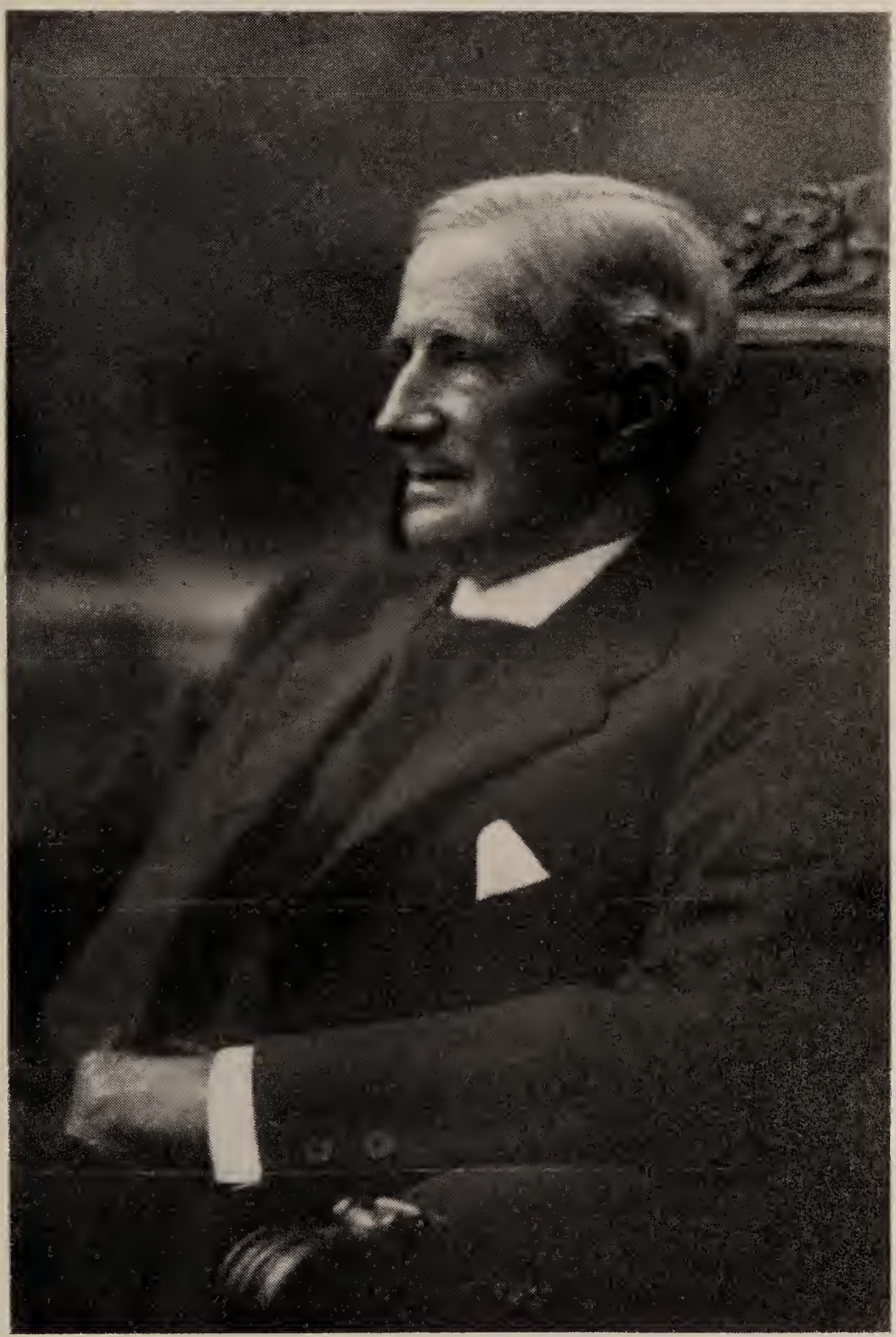


The Reverend
DR. LEWIS P. W. BALCH



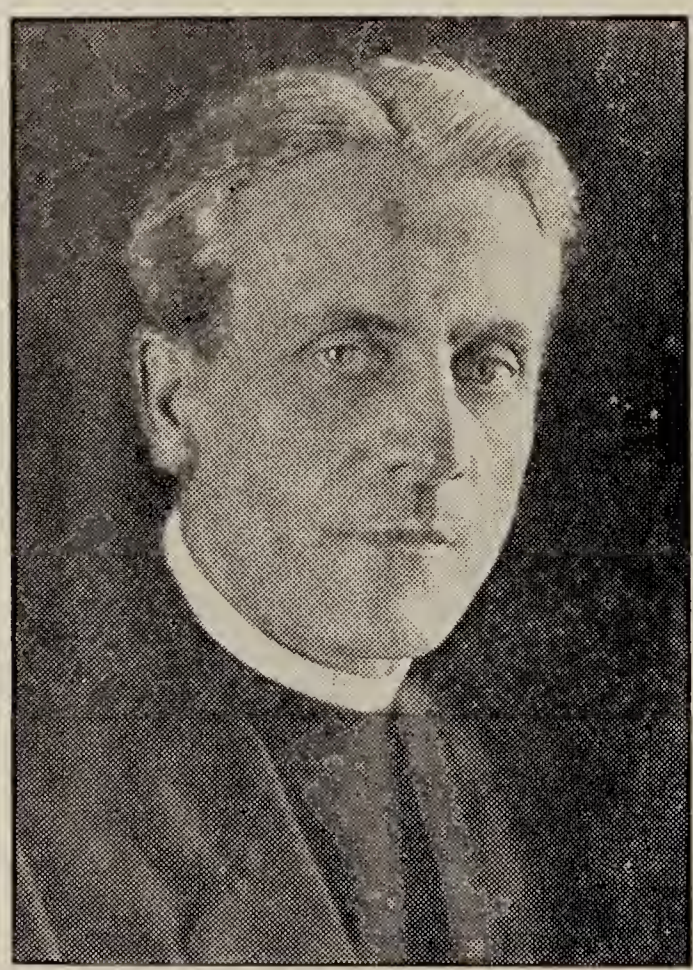
The Reverend
GEORGE L. LOCKE

THE REV. GEORGE L. LOCKE
As a young man



THE REV. GEORGE L. LOCKE
As he is remembered by many

The Reverend
JOHN GARDNER



The Reverend
ANSON B. HOWARD

CHAPTER VIII

THE SLAVE TRADE

Take a walk around Bristol and note the lovely old houses, many of them dating back from the end of the XVIII century, or the beginning of the XIX. We are back in the time of the second John Usher. In the early days of the young Republic, Bristol became a very important port of entry, and her ships were all over the world. This was fine, and Bristol had a right to be proud of her seamen, especially when they sailed successful privateers in the War of 1812. But, unfortunately, there is a cloud on the horizon, a very black cloud indeed, which from small beginnings grew rapidly into a human menace, threatening the spiritual welfare of every citizen of our town, for that cloud was the African slave trade.

Now it is perfectly true that slavery was not looked upon 150 year ago with the horror that is felt for it today. There were many good Christians who held slaves, and thought nothing of it. Back in the time of the first John Usher, that earnest pastor had endeavored to teach and baptize the 80 slaves then in Bristol. He ran into a stone wall of prejudice, and was unable to accomplish what he tried so earnestly to do. Slave owners would quote the Bible in support of their right to own human beings., a condition which Holy Scripture seems to take for granted. (Cor. XII-13-whether bond or free). Were not the majority of Christians in the Emperor's househould in Rome slaves? Even as late as the Civil War Bishop Hopkins of Vermont made himself extremely unpopular in New England by backing up the Southerners' claim to the right of slavery. It is only within recent years that the spiritual message of Christianity was realized to be absolutely incompatible with traffic in human beings, no matter what their color might be.

What is so ghastly about slavery in Bristol, a relatively unimportant factor in the life of the town, was the fact that because of the very lucrative slave trade, Bristolians (and even St. Michael's people) were engaging more and more in the transportation of human beings from Africa to be sold in the markets of the West Indies and the southern States.

There is no need here to describe the horrors of the slave

ships, even after the traffic was forbidden by the United States in 1808. There are plenty of books written on the subject which can give gruesome details of these diabolical voyages. Taken from their homes in Africa where they were used to roam in freedom, thousands of Negroes herded like beasts in the close quarters of a ship's hold, separated from their loved ones, these unfortunate victims of the white man's love of money, were brought to a "Christian civilization." Yet in spite of it all many were to be in future years converts to the Gospel of Christ, whose fathers and mothers had suffered the horrible tortures of the slave trade. That Bristol had a very large part in this unholy traffic is a sad fact which the following table taken from Monro's History of Bristol, Page 352, will prove. It lists the slaves imported to Charlestown during the 4 years when that port was open to the trade:

From 1st January 1804 to 31st December 1807

Vessels belonging to Rhode Island	59
Vessels belonging to Connecticut	1
Imported by merchants, Bristol	3,914
Newport	3,488
Providence	556
Warren	280

Total African slaves imported by Rhode Island, 8,238.

How shall we reconcile this with Christian Bristol? Of course, it cannot be done, but the condition of the household slaves of earlier days in Bristol was not to be compared with the slave trade of the first years of the XIX century. Thus Christianity exists side by side with the grossest evils, and it is not until some prophet arises who shows the impossibility of a condition of life in which the rights of the children of God are trampled under foot, that the Christian social conscience is aroused.

Perhaps the great religious revivals which, as we have seen in the last chapter, swept over Bristol in 1812 and 1820, were augmented by thoughts of the slave trade, "the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable." For it is a fact that while God waits a long time for His purposes to be carried out, He never waits in vain. "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea." (Heb. 11-14)

CHAPTER IX

JOHN BRISTED

(This account is taken from the History of the Narragansett Church by Wilkens Updike. St. Michael's Church, Bristol: A sketch contributed by a writer unknown in 1840.)

"John Bristed, Esq., a gentleman of high literary attainments who had, a few years before, relinquished a lucrative professional business in the City of New York, to devote the remainder of his life more immediately to the service of His God, retired to the pleasant and quiet village of Bristol, from the noise and bustle of that active City, to prosecute his studies in divinity more effectually, in the vicinity and under the direction of Bishop Griswold."

John Bristed had married a daughter of John Jacob Astor. They lived together only a short time, then he moved to Bristol, and she remained in New York. They met together once a year at dinner. Mr. Bristed insisted at the marriage that he would derive no pecuniary benefit from his wife. They had one son, Charles Astor Bristed, a distinguished scholar at Oxford.

"After his ordination, he remained here and rendered acceptable gratuitous assistance to the Bishop, supplying his pulpit during his frequent and necessary absences on Episcopal visitations. On the Bishop's removal to Salem, the Rev. Mr. Bristed was invited to officiate, "for the time being", and, shortly afterwards, by the unanimous vote of the vestry, was elected the permanent rector of the parish being instituted in 1830. Mr. Bristed began his new labours with ability and zeal, the parish continued as flourishing as formerly, and, in the winter of 1830-31, large accessions were made to the Communion; a general and anxious inquiry was made after the way of righteousness, and more than one hundred were added to the Church, being soon after confirmed. But it is deeply to be deplored that, after an unusual awakening, when large accessions have been made to the Church, in some instances, a whole year has afterwards elapsed, with the addition of scarcely one new communicant. Whether a church is more benefitted and more persons are brought to acknowledge the truth by occassional revivals, or by a uniform and continuous augmentation, probably creates, in the minds of many devout persons, doubts, which it would be exceedingly desirable to have

removed.

"Some years before Bishop Griswold left Bristol, efforts had been made to establish an Episcopal society in the adjoining and prosperous town of Warren, which were cordially seconded by many of its most respectable inhabitants, and Mr. Bristed continued to render most acceptable aid to that new parish, till the Rev. George W. Hathaway was settled there. Mr. Bristed is also entitled to much praise for his services in assisting to collect and sustain many new parishes in this State since his ordination.

"In 1833, it was ascertained that the church edifice required very considerable repairs and that it did not well accommodate all who worshipped within its walls. By the active exertions of Mr. Bristed, seconded by most of his congregation, resolutions were adopted to take down the old church and erect a new one in its place. This was carried into immediate effect, and, the next year, there was completely finished one of the most beautiful and commodious Gothic churches in the country, eight-five feet long by fifty-four feet wide, covering the long-endeared site on which the two former churches had stood. The church was consecrated by the Right Rev. Bishop Griswold, on the sixth day of March, 1834, and on the next day a sufficient number of pews were sold to defray the whole cost of the building (amounting to nineteen thousand dollars), including a basement lecture-room fifty feet square, a large organ, and a fine-toned bell.

"In 1837, Mr. Bristed's general health in a degree failing, he employed the Rev. Francis Peck (rector of St. Andrew's Church, Providence), to assist him for a number of months, but, a situation which might increase his usefulness, being offered in the City of Baltimore, he thought it advisable to accept it and remove thither.

"An addition of a number of respectable families was made to the parish in 1838, in consequence of the dissolution of the society of the Reformed Methodists, a large proportion of its members uniting with the Church.

"Mr. Bristed has always, when his health has permitted, been in the habit of preaching two sermons on the Sabbath and delivering a lecture in the lecture-room on Sunday evening. Both of these kinds of service are highly acceptable, the large room being always crowded. On one other evening of the week, he meets his congregation for social worship. The brethren also continue their prayer and conference meetings. Mr. Bristed, by collections taken at the monthly concert of prayer-meetings and by his own

liberality, constantly supports one student for the ministry at one of the Episcopal theological seminaries.

"Mr. Bristed's health continuing feeble and not adequate to the parochial duties of the parish, the Rev. Thomas F. Fales has been employed as his assistant, and he is now in that capacity acceptably officiating here.

"The communicants now number two hundred and eighty-seven, the congregation being respectable, and the largest in the town. Ten poor boys continue (1840) to be educated from the Nathaniel Kay fund. The Sunday-School is in a most flourishing condition, with thirty-five teachers, one hundred and seventy-five scholars, and a sufficient library. The services of the sanctuary are rendered more perfect by a large and well instructed choir of singers.

"Thus this Church, which began with doubtful prospects of success, when there were but two other Episcopal societies in the future State of Rhode Island, and they in their infancy, having literally passed through fiery trials, and experienced oppositions, difficulties and depressions, which few of our churches have been called up to suffer, is now, A. D. 1840, through the infinite goodness and sustaining care of God, one of the most prosperous parishes in the State.

"For His all-protecting and sustaining care, the Lord be praised."

REV. JAMES WELCH COOKE 1844-1850

Mr. Cooke was Mr. Bristed's successor. Through his efforts the wooden Chapel North of the church was built in 1848. It did not burn with the church in 1858, but has long since been sold and moved to the eastern end of State Street. A graduate of Brown University, his early work was in Lonsdale, R. I. where through his efforts Christ Church was founded. He left St. Michael's because of ill health, but later became secretary of the Protestant Episcopal Board of Foreign Missions. He was a very earnest disciple of what are termed "low church" views. His gifted evangelicism gained him an esteem by no means confined to his own congregation.

REV. JOSEPH TRAPNELL, JR. 1852-1857

Rev. Joseph Trapnell, Jr. became the next rector of St. Michael's. He was born in England and educated at St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland. He served St. Michael's with great fidelity for over five years. He was then called to St. John's Church, Keokuk, Iowa.

REV. WILLIAM STOWE 1858-1865

The Rev. William Stowe was elected rector of St. Michael's at the Easter Meeting of 1858. He was a deacon at the time but was soon ordained to the priesthood. That same year the third church was burned. The corner stone of the new church was laid on April 12, 1860. The new edifice was consecrated on November 28, 1861. During the interval the congregation met for services in the old Methodist Meeting House on the common. Mr. Stowe resigned in 1865 to accept a call to Grace Church, Port Huron, Michigan.

REV. LEWIS P. W. BALCH D.D. 1865-1866

Mr. Stowe was succeeded by Dr. Balch who remained with us for but one year. Dr. Balch was a Virginian by birth and already a distinguished churchman before he came to St. Michael's. He served as secretary of the House of Bishops from 1853 to 1866. He resigned the rectorship of St. Michael's to become a canon of the Cathedral of Montreal.

CHAPTER X

COMMUNION SUNDAY

Let us look in on one of the four "Communion Sundays" at St. Michael's Church one hundred and twenty years ago. Facing us as we enter the main door of the church at the west end (where now the chancel is), stands with its back to Hope Street the Communion Table, a wooden table with four legs, covered by a "fair linen cloth" as required by the rubric. No ornament, not so much as a flower can be seen on the Holy Table; while standing directly behind it facing the congregation, Mr. Bristed is reading from a large and beautifully bound Prayer Book the familiar words of the Communion Service arrayed in a long white surplice. On the Altar, for altar it is, on which is celebrated the holy mysteries, the silver "communion plate" is displayed, massive in its weight and size, and of beautiful workmanship, a gift of Nathaniel Kay of colonial days. Closing in the sanctuary, a curved wooden communion rail accommodates a large number of kneeling communicants. In the gallery in the west end, a mixed choir of men and women, sings from the very abbreviated hymnal bound in the Book of Common Prayer, four hymns in the selection for the Lord's Supper, two of which we take as examples of the hymns heard in St. Michael's Church on Communion Sunday in 1836.

Hymn 94 (Present hymnal)

"My God, and is thy table spread?
And does thy cup with love o'erflow?
Thither be all thy children led,
And let them thy sweet mercies know!
"Hail, sacred feast, which Jesus makes!
Rich banquet of his flesh and blood!
Thrice happy he who here partakes
That sacred stream, that heavenly food!
Why are its bounties all in vain
Before unwilling hearts display'd?
Was not for you the victim slain?
Are you forbid the children's bread?
O let thy table honour'd be,
And furnished well with joyful guests!
And may each soul salvation see,

That here its holy pledges tastes!
Drawn by thy quickening grace, O Lord,
In countless numbers let them come,
And gather from their Father's board,
The bread that lives beyond the tomb!
Nor let thy spreading gospel rest,
Till through the world thy truth has run,
Till with this bread all men be blest,
Who see the light or feel the sun.

Hymn 96

To Jesus, our exalted Lord,
That name in Heaven and earth adored,
Fain would our hearts and voices raise
A cheerful song of sacred praise.
But all the notes which mortals know,
Are weak, and languishing, and low;
Far, far, above our humble songs,
The theme demands immortal tongues.
Yet whilst around his board we meet,
And worship at his sacred feet,
O let our warm affections move,
In glad returns of grateful love.
(Yes, Lord, we love and we adore,
But long to know and love thee more;
And, whilst we taste the bread and wine,
Desire to feed on joys divine.
Let faith our feeble senses aid,
To see thy wondrous love display'd;
Thy broken flesh, thy bleeding veins,
Thy dreadful agonizing pains.
Let humble, penitential woe,
With painful, pleasing anguish flow,
And thy forgiving love impart,
Life, hope, and joy to every heart.)

How simple, no cross, no candlesticks, no flowers! Yet how dignified and devotional, as those communicants knelt at the Altar, hearing the same words, and receiving the same Food as we do in 1956. It would have been an impossibility of the wildest imagination for that congregation of 1836 to visualize St. Michael's Altar today, nor would they have been alone in their lack of imagination; what church at that date anywhere in the United States

would have been arrayed in the Catholic apparel of the average Episcopal Church of our times?

But all unknown to the Episcopalians of Bristol one hundred and twenty years ago, a great change was coming slowly but surely. John Keble had preached three years before, in St. Mary's Church at Oxford, his famous sermon on national apostasy, and thereby had started the Oxford movement. What that has meant to Episcopalians the world over is too well known to need repetition here. Quarrels, misunderstandings, ritual disputes were coming in the near future, but also dignity, reverence, the beauty of holiness, which, producing in some parishes the fullness of sacramental, life, were to affect all churches in new life and vigor, with a wider conception of Christ's Holy Catholic Church.

At the Easter meeting in 1858 the Reverend William Stowe, although only a deacon, was elected Rector of St. Michael's, and ordained priest soon afterwards. During the year a very valuable gift of land lying just west of the church, was given by Mrs. Lydia S. French, with an excellent dwelling house, which has been used as the rectory ever since. On midnight of Sunday, December 5th, the church was totally destroyed by fire. I quote from Munro's History of Bristol: "The flames, when first seen, were bursting out from the large window in the eastern end of the building. So rapid was the work of destruction, that by one o'clock the church was in ruins. The rector succeeded in saving his robes. A Prayer Book, a book of Psalms and Hymns, two chairs, a looking glass and an umbrella-stand only were saved besides. The church was so densely filled with smoke that no one could safely enter it, and it was useless to attempt the removal of any but the articles named. These, with the exception of the two books, were all from the robing-room." It was said at the time of the fire that the sexton on being told of what was taking place, replied, "It cannot be for I have the key of the church in my pocket."

Plans were immediately made for a new church and in 1860 the present building was finished and next year consecrated by the Right Reverend Thomas March Clark, Bishop of Rhode Island. For the first time since the first church was built in 1728, the main entrance was on Hope Street, while the chancel was at the west end of the building. Why this radical change, which may seem to the average person of little importance? Most churches in England face east, i.e., the Altar faces the west door of the building. So general is this custom, that one can frequently tell the points of

the compass by the position of a church. The idea of it all is that as our religion came from the east, it is fitting that we should worship toward the east. That is the reason why the choir facing north and south, turn to the east at the recital of the Creed, the Faith of the Church. It is not to the Altar that they are facing, but to the east, where, of course, the Altar is placed. Undoubtedly, it was more convenient for the congregation to go into the church from Hope Street than around the corner, on the side from Church Street. But a fine old custom was done away. Then, too, it must never be forgotten that the bodies of John Usher and his son are buried under the east end, where once the chancel stood, now the main door into the church. No further description need be given of this lovely Gothic church of brown sandstone, so well known to us all, and then soon to be guided by the devoted care of George Lyman Locke, who for over 50 years carried the parish from the Reconstruction Days of the Civil War to the end of the First World War.

CHAPTER XI

THE RECTORSHIP OF DR. LOCKE

PART I

1867 - 1877

Mr. Stowe resigned the rectorship of St. Michael's in 1865, and was succeeded by the Rev. Dr. Lewis P. W. Balch who, remaining only one year, left to become a Canon of the Cathedral of Montreal. The Vestry elected the Rev. Mark Antony DeWolfe Howe of Philadelphia, who declined the call, but recommended the Rev. George Lyman Locke, assistant at Trinity Church, Boston, for the position. Mr. Locke, a native of Boston, was a graduate of Harvard in the class of 1859. The following letter of acceptance to the call by Mr. Locke, gives a very good insight into the character of the young clergyman.

Boston, May 9th, 1867

Benj. Hall)
E. W. Brunsen) Committee of St. Michael's Church,
Dr. S. S. Drury) Bristol, R. I.

Gentlemen:

May I beg you to convey to the parish of St. Michael my answer to the communication received therefrom through you. That communication I understood to be an invitation from the Parish expressed by a unanimous vote, to accept the rectorship of the Church and Parish, the salary to be fifteen hundred dollars per annum payable quarterly together with the use of the rectory.

I desire to express in the first place my deep sense of the honor conferred in proposing for my acceptance the charge of a Parish so venerable and so highly respected as that of St. Michael's in Bristol. I desire also to express my very great satisfaction and at the same time my devout thankfulness to God, that the result of my temporary ministrations in the Parish should have been so favorable an impression on the minds of the people, and such a measure of spiritual edification as to lead to the proposal. The invitation I accept with the same cordiality with which I believe it to have been given. I regard it as a call to fulfill in a definite sphere the vow of my ordination, namely, to give faithful dili-

gence always so to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments and the Discipline of Christ as the Lord has commanded, and as the Church hath received the same, according to the Commandments of God; so that I may teach the people committed to my care and charge, with all diligence to keep and observe the same and as such I accept it. As a Pastor in Christ's Flock it will be my object and endeavor to set forth to the people committed to my charge the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and to lead them all, young and old, in the way of Christian life. As Rector of a Parish and Church in the communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, it will be my aim to regulate its spiritual affairs in accordance with the spirit of the Formulae and Laws of that Church. I shall feel myself bound to be diligent and active in seeking by wise and practicable measures to promote the true spiritual interests of the Parish, the Diocese, the Church at large, the World. I shall also feel myself at liberty to call upon the whole Parish and its various members to second me in all such efforts, by their sympathies, their prayers, their active efforts, their money; at liberty and called upon to teach plainly the obligation of every Christian to regard himself as devoted to the Lord. There is only one stipulation that I have disposition to make — I must ask to be allowed an annual vacation, including not less than four consecutive Sundays during which vacation I shall be free from responsibility for the administration of parochial affairs. I do not look to have the holiday during the months of July and August.

Supposing this my answer to be acceptable to the Parish, I should be glad to have my acceptance of the offer date, if there be no objection from last Sunday (May 5th) in order that I may cover the interesting occasion of the Confirmation of my first class. I would also like it to be understood, in that case, that I take the charge with an honest sense of my inability to accomplish any result for good, except so far as it shall be "not I but Christ working in me." With a desire that it may be remembered by all, that it is by the Prayers and Faith of all that the effort of mine shall be made most effectual. In this and in all her works may the Parish of St. Michael glorify God.

I remain, gentlemen,
Faithfully yours,
George L. Locke

Two major events of great importance occurred during the early part of Dr. Locke's rectorship. One was the building of the Chapel on Hope Street, directly opposite the church. The other event of not so happy a character was the schism in the parish, resulting in the building of Trinity Church in 1875. (While the contention of the schismatics was undoubtedly right, viz; the pews of a church should be free and unappropriated, subsequent events have shown that patience would have won in the end and that the time was coming when St. Michael's would contain all the elements making up the Catholic character of the Episcopal Church).

In regard to the Chapel which was built in 1877, Mr. Munro slightly exaggerates, when he describes it in his history of Bristol as "one of the most beautiful edifices of its kind in the country." The Bristol Phoenix of April 21, 1877 gives a detailed description of the building which we quote in part: "The building is rectangular in plan, 52 by 76 feet, with a porch projecting five feet in front. At the northeast corner of the building, and connecting with the main room, is the rector's study, 11 by 14 feet. The study, in order to give it a rather more domestic character, has its walls decorated very appropriately with paper hanging. The arched panel at the north of the chancel arch (main room) is filled with a set of tablets richly illuminated in gold and color, and having the Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, with a design at the top having a cross entwined with ivy and holly. These tablets are the gift of Henry Codman, Esq., who also gave the rich crimson Brussels carpet of the platform. For artificial lighting, the building is amply provided with gas fixtures of polished brass."

The writer can well remember when Lenten services were held in the chapel, and when the rector's study became the curate's office. The chapel is still used for the Sunday School, and for parochial meetings. A recent attempt to sell the building to the Town of Bristol was overwhelmingly defeated in a vestry meeting. (1955)

After ten years as Rector of St. Michael's, Dr. Locke gave an address in church describing his life and work in Bristol from 1867-1877. Here are his own words to the congregation on Easter night, April 1st, 1877:

"It was my custom a few years ago to deliver in this place from time to time, discourses, constituting a series upon the earlier history of this parish. In this way the history was brought down

to a period quite within the recollection of many of the present congregation, considerably remote nevertheless from our own day. I have always cherished a purpose, not yet however accomplished, of completing the series some time or other. I believe that these discourses were found not altogether devoid of interest to those who heard them. To the writer of them, at any rate, the investigation involved in their preparation afforded a good deal of that sort of gratification which antiquarian research yields to many minds.

"It is with a different feeling that I address myself now to what is in some sort a resumption of the interrupted historical work, but is to me a good deal more than that, in fact an undertaking of a very different nature, and in face of which I am conscious of a certain sensation of oppression and of shrinking reluctance to enter upon it.

"For the task to the performance of which the occasion seems to invite with positiveness that gives to the invitation the nature of a command is no longer an attempt to reproduce the history of the parish in the remote past and to incite, with whatever of appropriate comment, the course of action of minister and people of generations long past away. It is not even to recall memories of more recent times in connection with the administration of those who, if still living, have long ago sundered their connection with the parish. But I am called to the embarrassing duty of reviewing my own ministry here, or let me rather say, what modesty both allows and demands, of recurring to the history of the parish during that ministry, and of addressing myself in so doing not to an outside and disinterested audience, but to one a large part of which has been associated with that ministry from the beginning. If, however, in this latter circumstance of the occasion there is an element of embarrassment. I ought to find in it at the same time one of encouragement, for I know that I shall be addressing a congregation of whose sympathy and kindly prepossession of feeling the recollection of many testimonies during these years of unworthy and halting ministration assures me.

"The occasion to which I refer is the occurrence of the first decennial anniversary now just past of my connection with this parish. In the long extended history of so venerable a corporation as this, dating its origin back to the year 1720, ten years is in one view not a long time. It is less than a 15th part of its age. But to any institution charged with such high functions and solemn

responsibilities as are committed to a Christian Church, 10 years are a long time when thought of as years upon which the heavenly judgment is to sit. And from another point of view, the personal one, 10 years, the first years of independent pastoral charge, moreover the most valuable perhaps and available for purposes of achievement in the work of life of all the 7 decades which make up the Psalmist's limit of mortality, the retrospect can hardly be other than in a certain view oppressive and painful, however much in another view there may be in that retrospect that is cheering.

"The 17th of February just passed was the anniversary of my first act of ministry in this Church 10 years ago. I was here by no wish of my own, but in a rather reluctant response to very urgent representations which had been made to me later in the previous week by a gentlemen deputed by the vestry to procure aid from some quarter or other as to the pressing need of some one to take charge here for 3 months. This I had refused to do, having already made engagements in another direction for the approaching season of Lent. I had, however, yielded to the solicitation so far as to consent for a single Sunday and had come down by late train on the previous night. St. Michael's, Bristol, was scarcely more than a name to me and even as a name not familiar. Many years before I had happened to hear of the town and the church in connection with the visit of a friend to this place, but that was about all of my association with either. I was here for a single Sunday, a stranger to everyone, and all were strangers to me. I was the guest for that brief visit of a gentleman well known then and for a year or two longer for his public spirit and generous activity in the parish and in the town, whose subsequent removal from this to his native place in an adjoining State was generally regarded as a public calamity, and who has now for some years ceased to be numbered with the living, Mr. Charles Sherry. That February Sunday in 1867, as I recall it now, was a cold, leaden, cheerless day. The interior of this building as it then was, had not about it much warmth of color to counteract the influence from the dullness without. As I entered at the morning service from the robing room, I recollect that the first impression on my mind was that the size of the congregation was hardly proportionate to that of the building. I remember that during the session of the Sunday School, which I visited, I was taken by the Superintendent who was also the Senior Warden of the parish,

for a view of the parsonage house, which I doubtless looked upon with much less of interest than I should have done had I known it was presently to become and to remain for so many years my home. It is a curious exercise of thought to me to recall from the point of view of today my first impressions received on that Saturday evening and Sunday of persons, places, and surroundings then all strange and novel, but which the contact and experience of years have long made as familiar and as much matters of course as the circumstances of childhood. That Sunday viewed from this seems to me a day very long ago, a point somewhere in the remote past of my life. Its duties were soon over. But when I left the town the next evening I was no longer free. I had committed myself over night to return for the next Sunday and to remain for three months.

"Thus my hastily arranged journey on a gloomy Saturday afternoon to an unknown church in a distant unknown town, to minister to a congregation of strangers as I supposed for a single day was in reality taken under plainly providential guidance I have never doubted, for the purpose of taking up a permanent work, amidst scenes of natural beauty (such as when the test should come some years later it should be found almost impossible to relinquish) amongst, and for, and with a people whose interests should in time come to be as my own; whom I should come to know and regard with that knowledge and regard possible, in the same degree and in the same wide extent, to no other relation in life than to that sacred one which brings the pastor of a Christian flock into such varied intercourse with the households of his charge; as adviser, helper, consoler, partaker with them and ministrant in their richest joys and most absorbing griefs; admitted often to the inner sanctuaries of domestic life, looked to also as the appointed leader in the associated public functions of church life, a relation growing moreover wider and closer year by year.

"For the Ministry which I assumed as I supposed for a day when for the first time in my life I entered this chancel on that Sunday morning which I have described, has been continuous from that moment to this. I find that on referring back to my official register that the subjects of the two sermons preached on that first visit were 'Coming to Christ' and 'Excuses.' My first act of private pastoral ministration was performed a day or two later when I was summoned from Boston by telegraph to administer the Sacrament of the Supper to a godly woman whose praise

THE REV. ANTHONY R. PARSHLEY, CANON

Locke Memorial Preaching Cross

The Reverend
DANIEL K. DAVIS, CANON

The Reverend
DELBERT W. TILDESLEY, CANON

Photo by E. W. Roorbach

Serviceman's Altar where Canon Larned celebrated the week-day services

ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH HOUSE

had long been in this church and town, and who had been now a good while prostrated with the illness which not long after fulfilled its early promise of being final. There were circumstances of that simple service which made it doubly impressive. For the principal recipient, to the joy of strong and clear personal faith there was added another that was two-fold, a rejoicing over others very dear and near to her now for the first time partakers of the sacred elements.

"My first Baptism was on Ash Wednesday two weeks later, a man past middle life, not a man of many words but who had been thinking much and feeling deeply and who came to give a hearty assent to the demands of the Baptismal office. His subsequent life of seven years adorned the doctrine he had so earnestly professed. Three weeks later I was for the first time called to read the burial service. It was my introduction to my new parish (which was also my first parish, for during the three earlier years of my ministry I had filled only a subordinate position in a city church) detecting in sluggish or in reserved natures the indications of fitness or unfitness, unskillful in discriminating between a superficial passing enthusiasm and a deep-seated purpose divinely begotten, too timid or too amiable to deal honestly and plainly with those needing rebuke and warning rather than encouragement, or inconsiderate in dealing with the timid and self-distrusting, especially he may be himself wanting in the clear perception of the truths involved in the doctrine of Christian life. Much of this I discovered in the course of my own attempts at guiding those who applied to the be admitted candidates during this our first Confirmation Season. Those with whom I had to deal were for the most part strangers to me. Of that superficial excitement and stimulus of the religious faculties unaccompanied by a deep conviction and determination of will, to which I have just referred, there was, as was to be expected, under the circumstances of the time, probably in considerable degree. And yet it would not now seem strange had the number out of this large confirmation class who should prove steadfast been proved smaller than it has been. Of the 43 confirmed May 5, '67 - 1 has died, 3 have withdrawn to Trinity Church, 11 have removed from town, 1 is unaccounted for, 7 never became or almost immediately ceased to be communicants, while the remaining 20 are recognized as 'communicants in good standing of this parish.'

"I should be sorry to have it supposed that such a showing as

this of so large a proportion as more than half of a whole class of candidates falling back and as in these cases at once from their position as avowed Christians was common. Such a thing has occurred with no subsequent class. The largest number at any one time since 1867 was that of last year, viz; 31. The entire number confirmed in these ten years has been 176. I regard it as a good indication of the spiritual condition of the parish that the proportion of young candidates has been of late years large. It is rarely that I encourage those under 15 to present themselves. Nor do I mean that those above that age are always encouraged to do so. Of course no absolute standard of years can be fixed. But I cannot consider it to be a hopeful sign for a church when its children are accustomed to look upon themselves as ineligible by virtue of their tender years for active church membership. It is indeed a mistake to encourage children while still too young to know their own minds and purposes, to seek participation in sacred transactions which they cannot appreciate. It is a grievous error also to encourage the feeling that the attainment of a certain number of years is the main condition for confirmation. But it is no less an error to foster in them the idea that they must have first encountered and vanquished the temptations of ripening years before they can be fit candidates for the rite of avowal of Christian Faith and purpose. The last confirmation class of 31 members, 3 were married persons of mature years, whom we leave out of this analysis. Of the 28 who mainly composed the class, 5 were of the age of 15 or less, 5 were 16, 9 were 17 to 19, 9 were between 20 and 25.

"The infant Baptisms during 10 years have numbered 164, those of adults 86, in all 250. The communicant list has been as it would naturally be in view of the former history of the parish, which has seen it increased from time to time since the year 1812 by very large accessions, an unusually long one for a church in a town no larger than ours. The legislation of the Church on the subject of parochial removals as well as of desertion of the Lord's Table has been and remains so loose that to make a communicant list accurately correct is a difficult not to say impossible matter in any long established parish. Many persons are found who are unable to say whether their church residence is here or in some other place. Others again after removing to other places beg to be allowed, often without sufficient reason, to remain registered in their old home and decline to have their names inscribed in the

place of their actual residence. Such cases, however, are not very common. So it likewise happens, of course, that there are among the actual permanent communicants of this parish persons who claim connection with that of their former residence and desire not to be counted here. Again, in so old a parish as this the number of superannuated and invalid communicants who are rarely if ever seen in church is considerable. There are always, moreover, communicants in considerable numbers whose avocations or marriage connections, or other claims, call them to permanent or nearly permanent absence from their own church home to reside here and there in no place fixedly, or else in places where there is no church to which they can be transferred. Allowing, however, for all these causes and influences which have to be taken into account in the revisal from time to time of the communicant list, the disproportion between the number of registered communicants and those ever present at any one Communion has always been too great. My last report which was made up with some care returned 350 as the number enrolled. The largest number present at any one Communion in 10 years was 205, and that was in midsummer when many visitors were present. The average is much lower than that, about 140, which is quite too small to show a satisfactory spiritual condition of things. Of course it is never expected that in a large church anything like the Easter number of communicants can be assembled at any one service. The preventing causes are many. But it would not be unreasonable to expect that were the currents of spiritual life flowing in the church with such volume and activity as the blessing of the Divine Spirit earnestly and persistently sought by us would ensure, the representation would be considerably larger than it is. I do not forget that after all, statistics are not wholly satisfactory and may easily deceive. I should be very glad in many a time of discouragement during these 10 years it would have been a source of greatest help — to be able to feel assured that unfailing regularity of attendance at the Lord's Table on the part of those under my pastoral guidance was a sure indication of a right spiritual condition, and of a life not conformed to this world in its pettinesses and uncharitableness and frivolity, but transformed by the renewing of the mind. The number of communicants who have been formally dismissed with the canonical certificate in order to join the new parish of Trinity Church is 10. In addition to these others who had been for some time more or less distinctly identified with our Communion

but were registered elsewhere, have withdrawn informally for the same purpose, no formal action being necessary on their part.

"The number of marriages solemnized by me in 10 years has been 57, all with very few exceptions within the parish.

"The somewhat rambling statistical statement that I am making would be imperfect, I suppose, without some reference to the financial history of the parish during 10 years, which reference must, however, be brief and comprehensive. I will arrange the amounts distributed under the heads by which they are annually reported to the Bishop and Diocesan Convention. This statement, let it be understood, is not exactly correct in that the figures being taken from the Reports in Convention Journals include all the Convention year preceding June 1867, of which I was here only a small part. On the other hand, nothing is included since the last Convention, although the amount raised in that time is unusually large in consequence of the subscriptions and others to the new Chapel Fund. To be quite correct, therefore, 1 or 2 thousand dollars at least would have to be added to the total now given. Contributions then for the past 10 years:

"Diocesan Missions $794; Domestic Missions $5,263; Foreign Missions $3,705; Freed. Com. $782; Education for Ministry $1,300. Other objects exclusive of support and increase of parish work $6,567. Total for objects exclusive as just stated $18,917. Contributions including pew rents, income of Kay Fund, subscriptions, offerings in church, proceeds of Bakes, Fairs, etc, etc., for all objects connected with support of public worship in parish, salaries, care and improvement of property, diminution of debt, increase of Chapel Fund account $49,342. Grand total of receipts in 10 years from all sources for all objects $70,077, an average of $7,000 per annum.

"I sometimes find myself as I pass along one or another street of this town, noting in my mind the number of houses with which I have no association of some special experience of joy or trouble in which it has fallen to me in these ten years to be called upon to have a part. And in some neighborhoods of this town the number of such houses is small. Of course I do not find in this kind of recollection material for all in detail on this or any other public occasion. And yet I shall be pardoned the egotism of this kind of reference since it is not so much an anniversary in the history of the parish as one in my own life that I am commemorating. Of my own life indeed and yet my right to expect my hear-

ers to be interested in this sort of reference lies in the consideration that my interest come of experiences touching their lives much more closely even than my own. And to recall as I may, to myself the experiences of which the sight of these dwellings reminds me in which now one, now another, form of joy or sorrow or perplexity has at one time or another called me in my pastoral relation during these years, throws a certain glow of rich coloring over my past life here among you as it comes up to me, now in the recalling it.

"And I find a satisfaction in the thought that in these days when ten years is longer than the average length of rectorships or pastorates, I have been permitted to accomplish that period in one place. And this satisfaction arises not from the mere consciousness in itself of an unbroken continuance for that length of time, but because it has given me what I am persuaded is of much value to one in the ministerial office, viz; the experience of watching the development of a generation of those to whom he is appointed to minister.

"Dear brothers and friends, I know that on an accasion like this I ought to be speaking in more formal way and one more to edification. I find that now I am close to the end of my discourse that I have been all this time writing even without a text. I know there is enough to be said, much that ought to be said in the way of criticism, of encouragement, of exhortation, yes of reproof and grave rebuke. But I have not fallen into that vein. Only by an effort now could I throw myself into. I should scarcely exhort now or rebuke with simplicity or affect. It has been a pleasure to me to recall in what I am conscious is a very rambling and loose way these 10 years of ministry in a parish that any man might be glad to serve.

CHAPTER XI

PART II

1877 - 1919

What of the next 42 years? For Dr. Locke tied in length of service the 52 years of the first John Usher. This brief sketch is not a history of our times. Too many people are still in this world who remember Dr. Locke to look upon his rectorship as of the times of John Usher, Bishop Griswold and Mr. Bristed. The writer of this story of St. Michael's Church in Bristol was himself Dr. Locke's curate from 1911 to 1913, at the time of the building of the chantry, now the choir room, and is today still connected with the church. Therefore, this PART II must be brief and to the point, indulging in no fictitious fancies.

The XIX century showed a marvellous expansion of the American Episcopal Church. Native churches in communion with Washington and Canterbury were established in China, Japan and the Philippines. Cathedrals started building, and parish churches were set up where the Episcopal Church had never been known. Seminaries were crowded and revisions of the Prayer Book took place more in harmony with the old book of the Church of England as for instance the restoration of the Magnificat in Evening Prayer. Ritual movements started up to receive much condemnation in official quarters, but finally to triumph. With the spread of Darwinism the Church had to return to the Early Church in order to combat fundamentalism on one side and liberalism on the other. The result was a stable and orthodox Christianity which heretics and fundamentalists tried in vain to destroy. Biblical criticism, which simply meant Biblical research, soon brought to light the difference between truth and legend. The historical accuracy of the first chapters of Genesis did not bring into question the doctrine of the Incarnation. A child in Sunday School could now learn that the days of creation were not days of 24 hours.

Where in all this did Dr. Locke stand? He stood where a great Bible scholar would stand, not questioning the Creeds of the Church, nor obsessed with verbal inspiration. In regard to the doctrine of the Church, he was to some of us less satisfactory. While recognizing the growth of Anglo - Catholicism, he was

even willing to have as his first curate a young man who was considered very "high church", and to allow him to establish an Early Service for every Sunday, and to abstain from being present at the evening celebration of the Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday. With the ornaments of the Lord's Table, a cross and flowers, he was content, and would not have been altogether in sympathy with the many candles on the Altar today. Changes came about of which he was aware, as of the almost universal introduction of colored stoles. Whether he approved or disapproved would to him be a matter of small importance. Like Galileo "he cared for none of these things."

What Dr. Locke cared for all his life was the spiritual life of his parishioners. That was his big concern. Were it not for the devoted energy and great efficiency of his daughter, Mrs. Wallis Howe, the Rector might never have had a curate, even towards the end of his life he would not relinquish any work his conscience told him to do. At times much to the consternation of his curates. That he was the pastor of Bristol, beloved by many outside his own Church, is still well remembered. That he was a great hospital visitor with a wonderful knowledge of medicine, often doing chores that a nurse would be expected to do, gave him a unique place in the community. Caring for the souls entrusted to his charge, he never regarded a funeral as a routine matter, but said one day sadly to the writer: "Bertie, if all the dead of St. Michael's Church whom I have buried came to life and entered the church, there would not be room enough to get them into the building."

The easy optimism with its slogan of material progress in the nation and the world was rudely shaken by the First World War. Just previous to that time Dr. Locke had been served by the Rev. John Gardner of Providence, a priest lately returned from the Missionary District of Oklahoma, and who in spite of being crippled did a valiant work for St. Michael's. Mr. Gardner was succeeded by the Rev. Anson B. Howard, a former Baptist minister, under instruction for Holy Orders in the Church. Mr. Howard took up his residence in the Rectory, while Dr. Locke settled permanently in the house of his daughter and son-in-law, on Woodlawn Avenue. Here on March 23rd, 1919, the old Rector was called by God to the life of the world to come, and shortly afterwards a beautiful cross was erected in his memory, and the ground between Holmes House and the church became known as the Locke

Close. A fitting memorial indeed, as is also the life-like bas-relief in the church, to one who like Sir Christopher Wren of St. Paul's Cathedral could say, "If you want a memorial of me, look around."

The following prayer from the Book of Common Prayer was printed in "Life" in its "Special Issue Christianity" —

A PRAYER FOR OUR COUNTRY

Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage; we humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord and confusion; from pride and arrogancy, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

by the Rev. George Lyman Locke

CHAPTER XII

ANSON B. HOWARD 1919-1929

This clergyman was a very quiet man. He was a mystic by nature. He was a great student, and spent hours reading in his study until early morning. He seemed by some to be not of this world, but as one of the saints of old. Mr. Howard had a deeply sympathetic nature, and is remembered with much affection by his friends. He felt that the care of St. Michael's parish in his old age was too heavy a burden for him to carry and finally resigned the charge, to take the rectorship of a small parish in a mill village—Emmanuel Church, Manville, R. I. He died Nov. 19, 1950.

ANTHONY R. PARSHLEY 1929-1947

About this time Bishop Perry directed that all the rectors of colonial churches were to be honorary canons of the Cathedral of St. John. So Canon Parshley comes upon the scene. Had St. Michael's Church been the cathedral of the Diocese, there could hardly have been better community, fraternal, military and ecclesiastical services than were held in St. Michael's during this rectorship. Canon Parshley was a public figure, not only in the Church but in the State as well. He made many friends in the parish and in the town, and he resigned to become Archdeacon of the Diocese of Rhode Island. He is now on the Diocesan staff working among the young people just as he did while at St. Michael's. He is also administrator of the Episcopal Conference Center at Pascoag, managing editor of the Rhode Island Churchman, and Rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Pawtucket. Still wherever he is his heart will always be in St. Michael's, for he is one of us.

DANIEL K. DAVIS 1947-1954

Canon Davis had been a chaplain in the Navy during the Second World War, and when he came to St. Michael's he showed much interest and skill in handling young people. The 9:30 Holy Communion Service, which his predecessor had inaugurated,

became a great power in the parish, especially with the youth. He is remembered affectionately by many of the girls and boys of the Conference Center at Pascoag, where he was director and chaplain of the camps under Canon Parshley. Canon Davis received a call to be Rector of St. Paul's Church, Brockton, Massachusetts, a large parish, and went there in 1954.

We have now come to the end of our story. Nobody could be more aware of its deficiencies than is the writer. Much has been left out that could have been put in, especially as regards the persecution of Church people by the Puritans in Bristol in the first half of the XVIII century — imprisonment for taxes unpaid to support the Puritan minister. Much happened between the rectorship of Mr. Bristed and the fire of 1858. Then too, there is too little attention given to the wardens and members of the vestries in recent times. However, the intention was to write the story of certain rectors of the church, that judging by them their influence would be felt by the parishioners. St. Michael's is an old and honorable parish and has been well served from 1720-1955 by its 14 clergy, and by its distinguished sons and daughters in Church and State.

Missionaries and Rectors of St. Michael's Church in Bristol:

James Orem	1720-1721
John Usher	1722-1775
John Usher, Jr.	1793-1804
Abraham L .Clarke, Assistant	1800-1803
Alexander Viets Griswold	1803-1830
John Bristed	1830-1843
James W. Cooke	1844-1850
Joseph Trapnell, Jr.	1852-1857
William Stowe	1857-1865
L. P. W. Balch, D.D.	1865-1866
George L. Locke, D.D.	1867-1919
Anson B. Howard	1914-1928
Anthony R. Parshley	1929-1947
Daniel K. Davis	1947-1954
Delbert W. Tildesley	1954—

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